

Second crossing to be delayed

AMMAN (AFP) — The opening of a second border crossing between Jordan and Israel, originally slated for mid-October, has been postponed because of a delay in building a new bridge, officials here said Saturday. "The postponement is due to the non-completion of work on the Israeli side," said Brigadier Imad Mayara, head of the army's engineering corps. Marwan Muehser, spokesman for the Jordanian delegation to peace talks with Israel, also confirmed the delay but he would not give a new date. "It all depends on the work on the Israeli side," he told AFP. U.S. President Bill Clinton announced that the border crossing would be inaugurated by Oct. 15. The announcement came after a meeting at the White House between Crown Prince Hassan and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on Oct. 3. The new bridge over the River Jordan will be the second border crossing for third country nationals between Jordan and Israel. The first one, at Wadi Araba near the southern port city of Aqaba, was opened on Aug. 8. The work is being carried out near the old Sheikh Hussein Bridge, which was partially blown up in the first war of 1948. It was further destroyed during the 1967 conflict.

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Gulf tension eases as U.S. confirms Iraqi withdrawal

U.S., Russia deadlocked over U.N. move

Combined agency dispatches

TENSION IN the Gulf eased slightly Saturday as the United States confirmed Iraq was withdrawing its Republican Guard forces and no longer in a position to attack Kuwait after a week-long standoff.

U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry, here visiting U.S. troops, said: "The deployment of Iraqi troops at this moment is still ambiguous. But it appears the remaining half of the one Republican Guard division still in the south appears to be waiting for transport back home."

"The Republican Guards are not in a position to attack as we stand," he told reporters a day after warning that one guard unit remained "dangerously close" to the emirate. "We don't expect an attack now."

"We are continuing our deployment ... we are not pocketing a peaceful outcome yet," Mr. Perry said. "But I am optimistic at this stage."

Mr. Perry was visiting U.S. forces bolstered by the weekend arrival of the aircraft carrier George Washington.

In Baghdad, Information Minister Hamed Yousef Hamudi said earlier that Iraq had ordered the withdrawal of its last crack Republican Guard in the south. "It is time to pull back this force to its former positions,

in keeping with its training programme," said Mr. Hamudi, quoted by the Iraqi News Agency.

Mr. Hamudi did not specify the division in question but said his announcement concerned "the Iraqi force ... about which the Americans have raised such a fuss."

The latest Gulf standoff erupted on Oct. 7 after Iraqi troops massed near the Kuwaiti border, triggering a

major deployment of U.S. forces in the Gulf to prevent a replay of Iraq's August 1990 invasion of the emirate.

Mr. Perry left open the possibility of a military strike if Iraq fails to withdraw its troops to pre-crisis positions, and said the crisis will not be over until the withdrawal is complete.

"I'm not making threats. I'm not rattling sabers. I'm just stating facts. We are not

prepared to be pinned down here for a long period of time. We expect a prompt return of Iraqi troops," Mr. Perry said.

With tension easing in the Gulf, attention shifted to the United Nations and a growing rift between the United States and Russia on how to deal with Iraq.

Washington and London have sponsored a resolution that would bar Iraq from

redeploying Republican Guard units near the Kuwaiti border or hoisting other forces there. They wanted to vote on it Saturday.

But Russia wants to delay the vote until after Foreign Minister Andrei Kozirev arrives on Sunday, and its U.N. Ambassador Vasily Sidorov threatened Saturday to veto the resolution if proposed Russian amendments were not adopted.

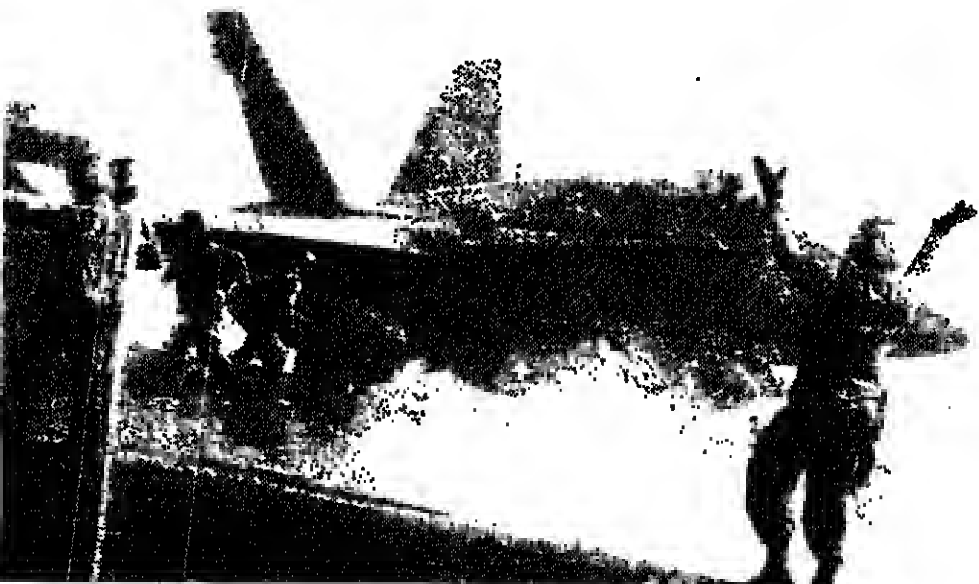
He said Russia wanted the resolution to reflect a joint Iraqi-Russian statement in which Baghdad offered to recognise Kuwait and Moscow pledged to work for the lifting of sanctions in force against Iraq since its invasion of the emirate four years ago.

The United States has dismissed the Iraqi offer, saying Iraq must comply with all U.N. resolutions stemming from the Gulf war and that to lift the sanctions would reward Iraq for triggering the new standoff.

Britain also rejected it, calling the offer "inadequate."

But France stopped short of lining up behind its Gulf war allies. On Friday Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said he was sceptical of the Iraqi offer, but on Saturday he said that if Iraq takes "this decision swiftly and unambiguously then that will be a new issue which we will have to take into account."

The French, while not insisting on a Security Council



U.S. Navy flight deck personnel rush around from the USS George Washington sailing off an F.A.-18C Hornet preparing to take off the coasts of Kuwait (AFP photo)

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Haiti's President Jean-Bertrand Aristide waves from the gangway of the plane that brought him to Port-au-Prince from Washington D.C. on Saturday (AFP photo)

Aristide returns home after three years in exile

PORT-AU-PRINCE (Agencies) — President Jean-Bertrand Aristide flew back to Haiti on a U.S. government jetliner Saturday, ending three years of exile and completing an important step in the American effort to bring democracy here.

The plane touched down at 12:12 p.m., and a host of dignitaries lined up on the airport runway to greet the priest who became Haiti's first democratically elected leader.

Thousands of people outside the national palace cheered as the blue and white Boeing 707 descended towards the airport.

It was a day many Haitians thought would never come to their country, terrorised for three years by army leaders who ousted Mr. Aristide on Sept. 30, 1991 in a bloody coup. It took the threat of a U.S. invasion to clear the way for his return after diplomatic attempts failed to dislodge the dictators.

U.S. soldiers guarded the airplane and dignitaries, including U.S. Ambassador William Swing and Mr. Aristide's cabinet, greeted Mr. Aristide as he descended from the plane and took his first steps on Haitian soil since the coup.

Accompanying Mr. Aristide were Mr. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Senators Christopher

Dodd and Tom Harkin, as well as members of the congressional black caucus.

Mr. Aristide, wearing a red and blue presidential sash, waved to the crowd as he stepped off the plane. The dignitaries clapped, and the new army commander, Major-General Jean-Claude Duperval, executed a long salute to his president.

The Haitian military band played the national anthem, and Mr. Aristide, standing at Gen. Duperval's side, placed his hand on his heart.

Crews unloaded from the plane a blue chair, made by orphans, that Mr. Aristide used as president. Mr. Aristide then boarded a helicopter for the presidential palace.

Haitians by the thousands had streamed into Port-au-Prince and to the airport to greet the returning president. "He is our saviour," shouted one old man totting a picture of the little bespectacled priest.

Duffault Duvernois, 22, settled in on a flagstone walkway with some water and three fellow students.

"I haven't been able to sleep since Father Aristide left the country," he said, then smiled. "But I'll be able to sleep tonight."

A line of dancing, bouncing Haitians passed by, singing joyfully, waving a flag, waiting for the new dawn of

democracy in their country.

But many Haitians were nervous, too, on the eve of Mr. Aristide's homecoming, fearful that his remaining political enemies especially in Haiti's right-wing paramilitary groups — might disrupt it with new bloodshed, or his supporters might turn violently vengeful for three years of repression.

The 20,000-member U.S. military force here was on heightened alert, more than two dozen Sheridan light tanks took up strategic posts in the capital, and U.S. helicopters crisscrossed the skies. American troops manned sandbag positions atop the national palace.

In Washington, U.S. President Bill Clinton said the return of Mr. Aristide to Haiti marks the start of a new era for that country.

"Even as I speak with you this morning," the president said in his weekly radio address, "Haiti's first democratically-elected president is flying home to resume his rightful place at the helm of his country."

The president praised U.S. troops with doing a "remarkable job in moving Haiti from fear to freedom" and said Mr. Aristide's return marks "the start of a new era of hope for the Haitian people."

The challenges facing the Aristide government are huge.

Nuclear weapons experts visit Iraq

MANAMA (AFP) — A team of weapons experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are on a ten-day "routine" mission in Iraq, the U.N. said in Bahrain. Seven experts led by Briton Garry Dillon are to "take water samples to check whether they contain traces of prohibited elements," a U.N. official said. The team, which arrived in Baghdad on Friday, would be joined by two other IAEA experts who are permanently based in Iraq as part of long-term weapons monitoring, he added. "This routine mission, planned for a long time, has nothing to do with the current crisis" in the Gulf. "The United Nations is continuing as normal its inspection programmes in Iraq," he said.

Iraqi opposition leaders meet

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iraqi Kurdish and Shiite Muslim opposition leaders have met in the Iranian capital as part of efforts to coordinate the fight against Iraq's President Saddam Hussein. The Shiite group said Saturday. The Supreme Court of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) said its leader Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir Hakim held talks on Friday with Massud Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). They discussed "ways to strengthen the fight against the Iraqi regime and of consolidating unity" among Iraq's opposition groups, said the Tehran-based SCIRI. The two leaders also discussed the deployment of U.S. troops in the Gulf following an Iraqi troop buildup near the Kuwaiti border earlier this month and vowed to work to preserve Iraq's territorial integrity. Mr. Barzani was on his first visit to Iran since the Kurds took over northern Iraq after the 1991 Gulf war. On Thursday, he met Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati. Tehran supports the Muslim fundamentalist Kurdistan Islamic League (KIL).

PNA faces possible showdown with Hamas after kidnap arrests

Combined agency dispatches

GAZA CITY — Moving towards a showdown, thousands of Islamist activists rallied against Palestine National Authority (PNA) Chief Yasser Arafat's rule Saturday, and vigilantes threatened to "make Gaza burn" if arrests of fundamentalists continue.

Mr. Arafat's self-rule government urged Israel to resume talks on expanding autonomy and to reopen Israel to Gaza workers, saying the sanctions imposed after the kidnapping of an Israeli soldier played into the hands of extremists.

The hostage, Nachshon Waxman, 19, was shot dead Friday during an army raid on the kidnappers' West Bank hideout. Waxman's three captors and an Israeli commando were also killed. Hamas, the Muslim fundamentalist group which held Waxman, warned Saturday that it would kidnap more Israelis unless Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin agreed to free 200 Palestinian prisoners.

Hamas called a mourning strike for the kidnappers that shut down most of the West Bank on Saturday. The Izzedine Al Qassam brigades, Hamas' underground military wing, threatened to unleash a civil war if Palestinian police continued to arrest Hamas activists. Under pressure from Israel and the United States, Mr. Arafat ordered more than 160 rounded up this week as part of the effort to find the kidnappers.

"Izzedine Al Qassam's answer will be to make Gaza burn," said a Hamas leaflet distributed Saturday. "Hamas doesn't allow any faction to lay a finger on its followers."

Waxman's abduction forced Mr. Arafat into an unwanted showdown with Hamas, his strongest political rival. In the past, Mr. Arafat



Thousands of Palestinian students supporting the fundamentalist Hamas movement rally in Gaza City to protest the killing of three Hamas men in the West Bank village of Bir Nabala (AFP photo)

was reluctant to crack down, fearing his fragile government might not survive a confrontation in the streets.

But after the kidnapping, Mr. Rabin turned up the pressure, insisting that the hostage was held in Gaza and that Mr. Arafat was solely responsible for the soldier's fate.

In response, Mr. Arafat ordered the arrest sweeps. Ahmad Bahar, a Hamas leader, accused Mr. Arafat of surrendering to the Israelis.

"The Palestinian authority knelt before Rabin and arrested our fighters to appease the Israelis," he said as he paid his condolences to the family of slain kidnapper Salah Jadalla, 22, in Sheikh Radwan, a Gaza City slum.

Yasser Abed Rabho, information minister in the self-rule government, suggested Saturday that the crackdown against Hamas would continue.

"We will not permit any-

thing to harm national security," Mr. Abed Rabho told reporters after the weekly cabinet meeting. "The Palestinian authority... will continue taking measures to ensure national security."

In a first step, Mr. Arafat's self-rule cabinet decided to ban the use of mosque loudspeakers for political propaganda.

The self-rule authority also decided to confiscate unlicensed firearms in Gaza, an official said.

But the authority will also start releasing some of the 300 Hamas activists it arrested during the hunt for the kidnapped soldier. It also obliquely criticised Israel for trying to end the kidnapping by a commando operation.

"The Palestinian authority has taken a decision to control the use of arms. Only people with licensed weapons will be able to use them. The use of weapons in public places will not be allowed."

said Mr. Tayeb Abdul Rahim, secretary-general of the Palestinian authority. Earlier on Saturday, about 1,000 angry Palestinians marched in Gaza to demand that Mr. Arafat release the detained Hamas supporters.

Hamas statements threatened both Mr. Rabin with more kidnappings, and Mr. Arafat if Hamas followers were not released from Israeli and Palestinian jails.

"The Palestinian authority which arrested hundreds of Hamas activists and supporters must release them immediately. If these arrests continue, Qassam brigades will reply by setting the Gaza Strip ablaze on the heads of the Zionists and their lackeys," said the statement faxed to news organisations.

The Palestinian authority expressed sorrow for the death of Waxman but criticised Israel for stopping

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Clinton: Killing will not turn back Mideast peace

BRIDGEPORT, Connecticut (Agencies) — President Bill Clinton said Saturday was a "day of sorrow" because of the murder of an Israeli soldier in a commando operation but vowed the incident would not turn back the cause of peace in the Middle East.

The president told a political rally that Corporal Nachshon Waxman had been "murdered by terrorists who are the enemies of peace in the Middle East."

"He was a son of Israel, but many of you might know he was also a citizen of the United States," Mr. Clinton said.

"Our prayers and our hearts go out to the people of Israel and to the Waxman family as we say to them, the United States will stand with you in the cause of peace in the Middle East. We have come too far to turn back and we must not let the wreckers and the killers turn us back today," Mr. Clinton said.

The president spoke at an airport rally for the Democratic candidate for Connecticut governor.

Earlier Clinton spokeswoman Ginny Terzano said Mr. Clinton called Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Friday night and

expressed his "deepest sympathy" on the death of Waxman.

Israel's opposition parties on Saturday came out in support of the unsuccessful commando raid ordered by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on a guerrilla hideout near Jerusalem to rescue Waxman.

Guerrillas shot dead the soldier and one of the rescuers when the Israeli troops stormed their house in Bir Naballah in the occupied West Bank on Friday evening. The troops killed three guerrillas, army Chief of Staff Ehud Barak said.

The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, had warned it would kill the soldier it kidnapped in central Israel last Sunday if Israel did not release 200 Palestinian prisoners.

Mr. Rabin said on Friday he personally ordered the commando operation rather than negotiate a deal with Hamas.

"It was the right decision because the alternative to yield and surrender to terrorist demands would consign many innocent lives for future hostage-taking and future death," said Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of the main opposition party Likud.

Mr. Netanyahu, whose brother was killed in an Israeli rescue operation of hijacked Air France passengers at Entebbe in 1976, said the operation had been risky but necessary.

"There's really no alternative except to fight back and in this matter at least I support the government and Prime Minister Rabin completely," he told Israel Radio.

"When you embark on something like this you have to assume that both hostages and rescuers may die as indeed happened tragically here," he said.

Rafael Eitan, head of the right-wing Tsomet Party and a former army chief, said the raid followed Israel's tradition.

"I think I would have taken the same decision not to give in to terrorism, to go with strength, and do the best possible according to tradition," he told the radio.

However, an Israeli official said Israel did consider freeing the founder of Hamas in exchange for the Israeli.

Yossi Ginnosar, appointed by Mr. Rabin to coordinate efforts to free Waxman, said he heard the proposal for a

(Continued on page 12)

After costly dreams Iraq may have to forget Kuwait

BAGHDAD (R) — After a disastrous war, crippling sanctions and decades of calling it part of their country, Iraqis may have to abandon their dream of taking over Kuwait.

Baghdad's announcement on Thursday that it was ready to recognise Kuwait surprised many who grew up reading school textbooks that called the emirate an integral part of Iraq.

"We have tried all possible ways, children died, many starved and the economy is in a shambles — all for Kuwait. It is no longer worth it," one Baghdad resident said on Friday.

"I am happy that sore in the throat is over," said a Baghdad university professor.

But the troubled history of relations with the emirate so richly endowed with oil will be hard to forget.

"This government has done more than any other to recover the lost land. And now we will have to live with the hard facts we refused to accept for almost eight decades," said the professor, who asked not to be identified.

The decision could finally put to rest an issue that created instability in the region long before President Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion brought it before the world.

Known to the ancient world as Mesopotamia, Iraq later formed part of Turkey's Ottoman empire until World War I when it came under British rule.

Emir Faisal Ben Hussein, a member of the Hashemite Dynasty, became king in 1921 and the country regained full independence from Britain in 1932.

A military coup toppled the monarchy in 1958 and set off a period of political instability. The left-wing nationalist government of Brigadier Abdel Karim Qasim took over, ending Iraq's pro-Western stance.

A second coup by the military's pan-Arab forces ousted Qasim five years later and the new leaders developed closer ties with Egypt. Martial law was lifted in 1965 and a civilian government inaugurated.

The Sunni-dominated

Baath Party's coup in 1968 brought General Ahmad Hassan Al Bakr to the presidency at the head of the newly formed Revolutionary Command Council.

President Saddam served as Bakr's vice-president for 10 years before taking over as president in 1979.

After Iraq became a republic, Qasim mobilised forces along the border in 1961 and was about to take Kuwait. Only a swift buildup of British troops deterred him.

President Saddam, in his 1990 blitz, conquered Kuwait and declared it Iraq's 19th province.

The invasion prompted crippling U.N. trade sanctions and a huge troop buildup by the United States and allies who ejected the Iraqis after a seven-month occupation.

"We lost almost everything for Kuwait — our weapons, the core of our industry and suffered restrictions on what we are allowed to do in the future. Let us see what we will gain for giving it up," an Iraqi journalist said on Friday.

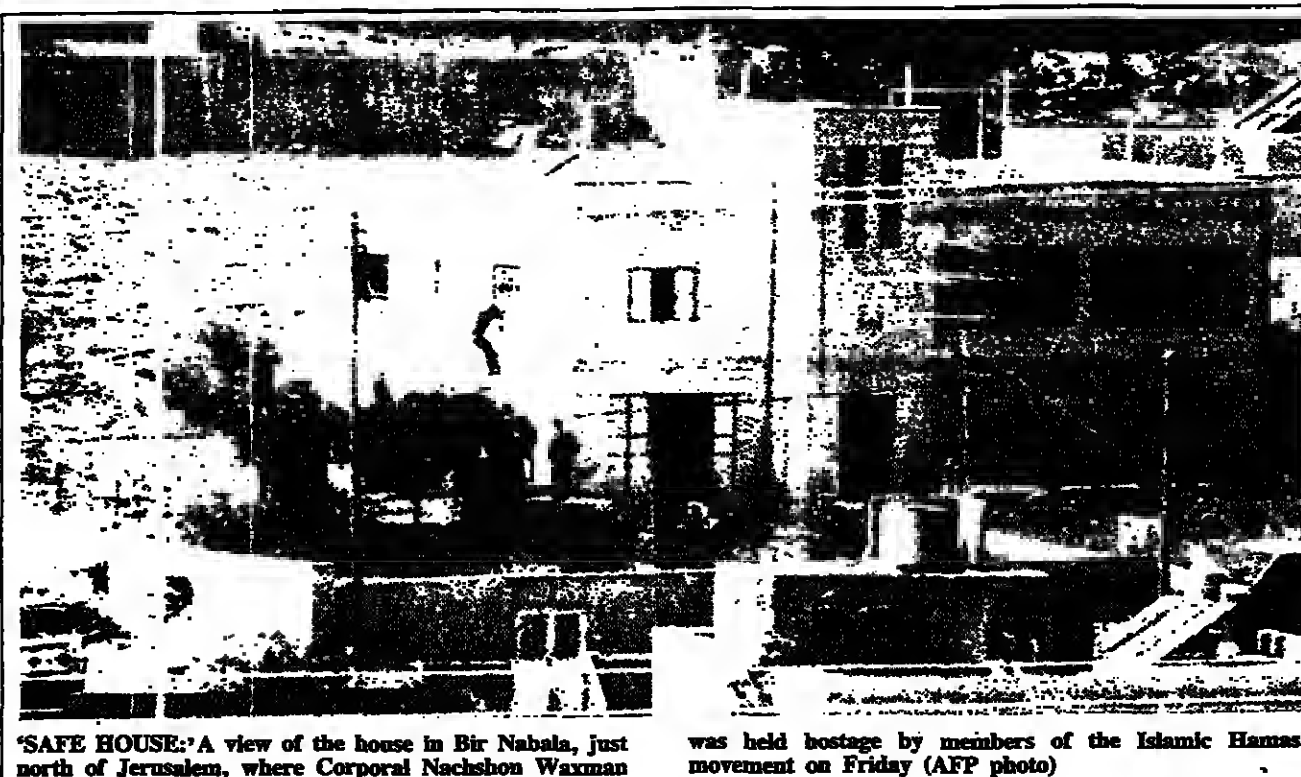
Some feared that despite the sacrifice, Washington was not yet ready to ease their suffering from sanctions.

"We know very well the United States does not want to lift sanctions on Iraq," the ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Hawra said in a front-page editorial.

Only a day before Iraq agreed to recognise Kuwait, Parliament Speaker Saadi Mehdi Saleh, a senior member of the Baath Party, ruled out any such thing while sanctions continued. Mr. Saleh attended meetings chaired by President Saddam two days earlier.

"This shows Iraq had no alternative but to recognise Kuwait and the new borders," one diplomat said. "They (Iraqis) finally realised that lifting of sanctions is better than historical claims on Kuwait."

Iraq has already revised textbooks, which no longer refer to Kuwait as its territory. The next step will be to educate the new generation that Kuwait has internationally recognised boundaries that their own government now accepts.



'SAFE HOUSE': A view of the house in Bir Nabala, just north of Jerusalem, where Corporal Nachshon Waxman

was held hostage by members of the Islamic Hamas movement on Friday (AFP photo)

Nasiriyah in centre of new U.S.-Iraqi dispute

CAIRO (AP) — Thousands of Iraqi crack troops digging in around the southern city of Nasiriyah could be back near the Kuwaiti border in a flash if their leader gave the signal.

The desert city, about 160 kilometres north of Kuwait, is linked to the border region by a modern four-lane motorway and a rail line which would provide quick and smooth transportation for any troop movements.

The road was used by Iraqi troops massing for the Aug. 2, 1990, invasion of Kuwait. U.S. forces also used the road when they reached the outskirts of the town near the end of the 1991 Gulf war. They did not enter Nasiriyah itself.

After the conflict, the highway became known as "the death road" because of the large number of retreating Iraqi soldiers killed along it in raids by allied warplanes.

Nasiriyah is located near the ruins of ancient Sumerian city of Ur, Biblical home of Abraham. Founded in 1870, the town is the capital of a marshy, date-growing province of Dhiqar and has about 150,000 inhabitants.

U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry told reporters in Kuwait Friday that more than 10,000 Iraqi soldiers appear to be digging in at Nasiriyah.

Washington wants Iraq to pull back all its troops moved south of the 32nd Parallel

since last week, when it started the buildup near Kuwait. The parallel — which is also the northern boundary of the allied "no-fly" zone established after the Gulf war — runs about 100 kilometres further north.

Iraq said it has kept a unit of its Republican Guards at a camp near Nasiriyah since 1991. Iraq has long maintained a strong military presence in the province, with at least one armoured Republican Guard division there to prevent a repeat of the 1991 insurgency in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

Nasiriyah was one of the centres of the rebellion against the regime by members of the country's Shiite

Muslim majority, who are concentrated in the south. The rebellion was put down by the same Republican Guard forces, who mercilessly pounded Nasiriyah and other cities with tanks and artillery fire.

Despite the military presence, most of the highway and other routes are controlled by bandits, army deserters or anti-government rebels.

They have made the area unsafe for civilians and sometimes even military vehicles — as a group of foreign journalists on a government-guided tour found out this week when they were robbed of thousands of dollars worth of equipment and valuables.

Iran voices distrust of U.S. presence in Gulf

JAKARTA (AFP) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on Saturday expressed distrust over Washington's move in sending troops to the Gulf and of an Iraqi commitment to respect Kuwaiti borders.

The Iranian president also criticised the Norwegian Nobel Committee for awarding this year's peace prize to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, whose government, Mr. Rafsanjani said, had "created four million refugees."

Mr. Rafsanjani said he welcomed any efforts aimed at the "prevention of aggression and adventurism," but added that Washington's reasoning behind building up its military presence in the Gulf was based more on self-interest.

Mr. Rafsanjani told a press conference marking the end of a three-day visit to Indonesia that he did not see any goodwill in the U.S. position over the situation in the Gulf.

"Considering the area, which is rich in oil and petroleum gas, the presence of the U.S. is just after the objectives and aim of the domination over such a valuable region and its assets," he said.

Mr. Rafsanjani said that during his talks with President Suharto, the Indonesian leader expressed worries about instability in the Gulf region and the necessity for efforts to bring peace and stability to the region.

"The U.S. is looking forward to its further presence and domination in the region, while, of course, Iraq is responsible for having such incidents occurring as well," he added.

Mr. Rafsanjani also said he doubted Iraq's announced recognition of Kuwait's post-Gulf war border, and said, "We do not have any good

experiences with the commitments made by Iraq."

He said Iraq had launched a war against Iran despite an agreement on borders signed by the two countries in Algeria in 1975.

If Iraq's recognition of Kuwait's borders is "sincere," that shall be good news, Mr. Rafsanjani said. "But we do hope this position will not be taken because of the weaknesses and the dangers that they have placed themselves in."

Mr. Rafsanjani also criticised the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Mr. Yitzhak Rabin.

Iraqis feel their lives, not the government, crumbling

By Neil Macfarquhar
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — The counters at Iraqi Airways offices are staffed every morning despite a complete lack of flights to anywhere since the 1991 Gulf war.

Traffic hums across rebuilt bridges, but dirt and garbage collect on streets that once were pristine. A chicken costs an average month's salary.

Iraqis, exhausted by keeping up the facade of normalcy, said Tuesday that the country is crumbling under the weight of an international blockade that has little chance of toppling President Saddam Hussein.

"People want to eat. People want to live in peace. They don't care about the regime. They don't care much about educating themselves. They have lost their ambition," said a school-teacher named Walid.

There is a sense of relief

that a looming confrontation, brought about by last week's deployment of Iraqi troops near the Kuwaiti border, may be ebbing. After the United States vowed to confront might with might, the Iraqis declared Monday night they were pulling their forces back. The United States, however, is unconvinced.

Foreign diplomats in Baghdad doubt that Iraq is about to repeat its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, a seven-month occupation that was ended by a U.S.-led military coalition during the Gulf war.

Iraq was schooled in the old Soviet Union's military tactics, which called for an invading army to have a three-to-one ratio over its target, the diplomats noted, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Iraq has sent an estimated 80,000 troops — one-fifth of its entire military — to the

Kuwaiti border region. Even if Iraq is not pulling them back, that is not enough to oppose the U.S. force of 70,000 that has been summoned to the area.

Iraqis and foreign diplomats say Iraq's threats to use its army again were a desperate ploy that worked: It grabbed the world's attention, pushing the United Nations trade sanctions back into the spotlight.

Iraqis feel their country has been complying with U.N. conditions for lifting the sanctions, which were imposed after the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Iraq met one of the main conditions by allowing the U.N. to destroy its weapons of mass destruction and to set up a monitoring system. It hopes an upcoming report by the U.N. Special Commission will lead to a lifting of the sanctions, which cut off oil exports, Iraq's main source of revenue.

In a sign of the chaos that has seeped across the country

since the war ended in February 1991, highway robbers grabbed tens of thousands of dollars in equipment and cash from journalists who travelled by bus to Basra Monday night.

Tuesday's newspapers pictured some of the 4,000 antiquities they said were pilfered from local museums "during the acts of terrorism in the aftermath of the aggression against the country in 1991."

Three years ago, Iraq was rife with reports of uprisings against the regime. Now the talk is mostly of organised crime with only a whiff of anti-regime undertones.

The trade embargo "is not really a blockade. It is a form of slow murder," said Mohammad, a trader at a tawdry sidewalk bazaar where Iraqis sell personal belongings like stuffed animals, silverware and old eyeglasses to raise a bit of cash for food.

"They tried to topple the government of Iraq. But they

only succeeded in toppling the people," he said.

Mohammad, like most people, gave only his first name. In this country of 18 million, people are suspicious of strangers.

Iraqis say they no longer have the energy to oppose the rule of Saddam Hussein. They are too busy trying to survive.

A chicken costs 750 dinars, about the average monthly wage of a government worker. That is \$2,490 at the official rate, which has not changed since the war. But at the widely used market rate, it is only \$1.20.

Government food rations recently were cut about 40 per cent. Before the cut, the rations of basics like rice and flour were considered the minimum needed to survive.

Medicine is scarce. The U.N. sanctions allow Iraq to import food and medicine, but it doesn't have the money to pay for them. One woman

in her 50s wanted a painkiller before undergoing a mastectomy. Friends scoured the town for days and finally came up with one amputee just hours before operation. It was diluted to last a few days.

Municipal services are decaying. At the Iraqi Airways office, employees report to work in their uniforms, take their stations behind the counters and drink tea. They are just trying to continue to collect their salaries — and to hope that the U.N. ban on flights will be lifted soon.

Despite Iraqi opposition claims of recent coup attempts, diplomats said there has been no serious internal sign of one since the summer of 1993.

Thousands of Shiite Muslim pilgrims from Asia were allowed into the shrines at Karbala and Najaf this year, site of some of the worst internal fighting in 1991. Diplomats consider this a sure sign that the regime feels in control of the situation.

Seminar to study how to raise water awareness

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) today opens a two-week workshop on spreading public awareness in the Kingdom about water and its consumption.

Organised in cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the workshop includes lectures on the effects of water on the environment, industrial pollution, water resources, water policies and management, adverse effects of pesticides on water resources, insecticides at home, rational use of insecticides, water's social and economic impact, laws and legislation concerning water and institutions concerned with water resources and development.

The workshop, which is expected to be attended by

supervisors of school clubs dealing with conservation of nature and RSCN officials will be part of the society's general programme which entails seminars and other activities related to protection of the environment and conserving natural resources, an RSCN statement said.

The programme is mainly aimed at orienting schoolchildren on ways for preserving in Jordan's water resources and to spread awareness among the members of the public on economising on the consumption of water for different purposes, the statement said.

The society will publish all the lectures in booklets to be distributed to schools and other institutions.

Several water experts from USAID and Jordan will deliver the lectures.

Jordanian prosecutor to visit New Jersey crime scene

MORRISTOWN (AP) — A Jordanian prosecutor plans to travel to New Jersey to review evidence in the slaying of a woman whose estranged husband killed her and then fled to Jordan with his children, officials said Friday.

Mohammad Ismail Abuequa, a nationalised American citizen, confessed to the crime after being detained in Jordan. He has been charged with first-degree murder and kidnapping.

The prosecutor, Fouad Daradkeh, notified Morris County prosecutors about three weeks ago that he plans to travel to New Jersey to visit the crime scene, review evidence and interview witnesses, said Lois Ferguson, spokeswoman for the prosecutors' office.

Although prosecutors would prefer to have Mr. Abuequa extradited to stand trial here, Ms. Ferguson said, they are pleased that Jordanian officials appear to be making an earnest effort in the case.

The United States and Jordan do not have an extradition treaty, so Mr. Abuequa will stand trial in Jordan. A trial date has not been set, she said.

Lawyers said the Jordanian charges carry maximum penalty of 20 years of hard labour in jail.

Mr. Abuequa, 46, admitted killing his wife, Nihal, 40, at her apartment in Parsippany-Troy Hills on July 4 in a dispute over the custody of the children. Her body was found two days later stuffed under a bed.

After a six-week stay in Jordan with his father, six-year-old Lisa Abuequa and three-year-old Sami Abuequa returned to the United States Aug. 18 with their mother's sister, Nesime Dokur, of Paterson, who travelled to Amman, to gain custody.

Ali Mahdi rejects accord to hold reconciliation meeting

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Interim Somali President Ali Mahdi Mohamud has rejected Friday's agreement by 12 Somali clan factions, including warlord Mohammed Farah Aideded's Somali National Alliance (SNA), to hold a Somali reconciliation conference here on Oct. 27.

Addressing a press conference north of Mogadishu on Saturday, Mr. Ali Mahdi, who is also spokesman for the group of 12, said he had refused to sign Friday's agreement and would neither recognise the meeting at which the document, known as the Memorandum, was concluded, nor recognise the document itself.

Describing Friday's agreement as provocative and unfounded, Mr. Ali Mahdi charged that agreement "was not in touch with the realities in Somalia and would lead the country into chaos and more fighting."

"The Memorandum is the usual behaviour of General Aideded to sabotage the efforts of the international community and of the Somali people to come together," Mr. Ali Mahdi said.

The self-styled Somali president also accused the U.N. Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM), particularly U.N. Special Representative Victor Gbebo and his deputy Hisham Omayad, of siding with Gen. Aideded and threatened to demand their removal from Somalia.

"Gbebo and Omayad have exclusively interfered in Somali affairs when they recognised and allowed self-appointed chairman of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), Colonel Abdullahi Yusuf, from the Majerteen sub-clan, to sign Friday's memorandum."

As a result, Mr. Ali Mahdi, who also accused UNOSOM of failing to invite Somali political leaders from Nairobi and from other regions of Somalia to participate in the coming reconciliation conference, warned: "If the U.N. representative and his deputy did not rectify their mistakes, I would demand their expulsion from Somalia on behalf of the 12 factions I am spokesman for."

In his statement, Mr. Gbebo had pledged the U.N.'s support for any efforts to hold the Oct. 27 conference and said that the world body would extend all necessary assistance for the conference, which was expected to include the representatives of all the recognised factions.

Friday's Memorandum called for the 16 signatories to an earlier peace agreement in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, to take part in the national reconciliation conference on Oct. 27, which would discuss the holding of elections to precede the formation of a government of national unity, but had failed to mention the self-styled interim president.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 Africa Au Pays Des Merveilles
17:30 Les Six Conspirations
18:00 Montagne
18:30 News in French
18:45 Us In Asia
19:00 News in Hebrew
19:30 F.A.I. Unfold Stories
20:00 News in Arab
20:30 You Bet Your Life
21:10 Sherlock Holmes
22:00 News in English
22:30 House of Elites
23:10 Fly By Night

PRAYER TIMES

04:17 Fair
05:24 (Sunrise) Doha
11:21 Dhuhur
14:57 'Asr
17:09 Maghrib
18:26 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Switzerland, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624990
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church

Tel: 622566

Church of the Annunciation Tel.

623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Epiphanius Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824528
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Lutheran-Salute Tel. 454932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures are expected to drop and skies will be partly cloudy. There will be chance of scattered showers particularly in the northern parts of the Kingdom with winds westerly moderate. In Amman, clouds will build up with winds northerly moderate and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp.
Amman 16/24

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Agaba 21 / 33

Deserts 15 / 26

Jordan Valley 20 / 32

Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 26, Agaba 33 Humidity readings: Amman 34 per cent, Agaba 42 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Adnan Zaghoul 898140
Dr. Hisham Kan'an 790286
Dr. Walid Al-Masri 675485
Dr. Jamal Ja'bari 793460
Firas pharmacy 661912
Al Asena pharmacy 670795
Nairouhi pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 649495
Shmouli pharmacy 676660
Nairouhi pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Zakaria Malkawi 218620
Alquds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Issa Omari 901266

Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661178
Water and Sewerage
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information
(directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 625101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 731111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority
Company 815615

Electric Power
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Akilich Maternity, J. Amn 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 604171/4
Shmouli Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musharraf Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 661127/77
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77701/3
Al-Basir, J. Ashrafieh 771112/6
Army, Marka 891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983233
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)755555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

04:30 Bangkok (RJ)
07:15 Agaba (RJ)
08:00 Damascus (RJ)
08:30 Jeddah (RJ)
09:00 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:15 Athens (RJ)
09:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
10:00 Beirut (RJ)
17:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:25 Paris (RJ)
17:55 London (RJ)
18:00 Brussels, Geneva (RJ)
18:35 Athens (RJ)
18:45 Frankfurt (RJ)
19:00 Madrid, Rome (RJ)
19:50 Vienna (RJ)
20:00 Rome (RJ)
00:20 Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:30 Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF)
13:25 Moscow (SU)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:00 Agaba (RJ)
05:45 Beirut (RJ)
06:45 Frankfurt (RJ)
11:00 Vienna (RJ)
11:00 Rome (RJ)
11:00 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:40 Istanbul (RJ)
12:00 Athens (RJ)
13:00 Frankfurt (RJ)
13:30 Athens (RJ)
20:05 Riyadh (RJ)
20:30 Jeddah (RJ)
20:45 Damascus (RJ)
21:25 Istanbul (RJ)
21:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
21:45 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
22:00 Bangkok (RJ)
22:45 Santa (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:20 Rome (AZ)
13:30 Doha, Muscat (GF)
15:05 Moscow (SU)
18:45 Larnaca (CY)
20:15 Cairo (MS)
02:25 Amsterdam (KL)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday

Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday

Arr. Amman 5



PRESENTING CREDENTIALS: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Tala Al Hassan Saturday discusses bilateral relations with Denmark's Ambassador-Designate to Jordan Anders Brandstrup when presented his credentials to the minister earlier (Petra photo)

Arab Israelis voice appreciation to Jordan

Knesset member Darawshe seeks to advance relations

AMMAN (Petra) — Visiting Israeli Knesset member Abdul Wahab Darawshe Saturday said that Arab Israelis appreciated the Jordanian government's continued service to the Palestinian refugees living in the Kingdom.

Speaking at a meeting with Assem Ghosheh, director general of the Palestine Affairs Department, Mr. Darawshe, who is accompanied by a 65-member Arab-Israeli delegation, said that the Jordanian government has been shouldering heavy financial burdens to provide services for the displaced Palestinians. He said he hoped that the Jordanian and Palestinian people would find ways to advance their bilateral relations in all fields.

Mr. Ghosheh briefed Mr. Darawshe and the accompanying delegation on the government's health, social and educational services at the refugee camps in cooperation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), and the Jordanian facilities for the Palestinians in the occupied lands with regard to travel and other matters.

Earlier Mr. Darawshe and the delegation visited the Bader Brigade of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) stationed in Jordan and paid tribute to the Jordanian Armed Forces for their training of the Palestinian troops. Later he watched a military parade by the Palestinian forces as well as exercises in martial arts.



TAKING UP WOMEN'S ISSUES: Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Saturday receives at her office a group of Arab-Israeli women who are part of a 65-member delegation accompanying Israeli Knesset member Abdul Wahab Darawshe. The Princess and the team discussed women's affairs. The visiting women briefed the Princess on the Arab women's unions

under Israeli rule which are concerned with cultural, educational, social and political fields. Princess Basma briefed the visitors on the activities of the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) and also outlined the Jordanian women's strategy and current preparations for the Kingdom's participation in the world conference on women to be held in Beijing next year. (Petra photo)

Inspection, control bureau reports it saved state treasury JD 2.2m

AMMAN (Petra) — In the past four months alone, the efforts of the Administrative Inspection and Control Bureau have saved the state treasury JD 2.221 million, according to acting bureau chief Eid Shakhaneh.

Also, Dr. Shakhaneh said, the bureau's examination of 14 government departments during the same period, uncovered and rectified 151 violations.

While conducting its work, bureau inspectors provided advice on the restructuring of departments, and on keeping accurate records and registers of their activities and staff performance. Dr. Shakhaneh added.

The chief said the bureau

has been urging government offices to abide by regulations stipulated in the Civil Service Commission's statute concerning allowances for employees, selection of staff and appointments and matters regarding supply and purchases as well as controlling expenditures.

Referring to semi-independent companies, in which the state holds equity, Dr. Shakhaneh said that a related study of these companies' performance for 1991, 1992 and 1993 will be submitted to the Prime Ministry.

At present the bureau is preparing recommendations to the government concerning the status and service of

legal consultants attached to government departments and questions related to the extra allowances given to employees in certain departments, Dr. Shakhaneh announced.

The bureau, he said, welcomes comments, complaints and grievances by government officials, and to date, it has dealt with 50 such cases in correcting related problems.

In a bid to fulfil the government's aim of establishing a decentralised system, Dr. Shakhaneh said the bureau plans to open two branches in Irbid and Aqaba to deal with issues concerning government departments in the north and south of Jordan respectively.



REVIEWING EDUCATIONAL TIES: Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh meets at his office Saturday with Qatari Ambassador to Jordan Naser Abdul Aziz Al Naser. The ambassador delivered an invitation to the minister to visit Qatar next month to sign an executive programme for the implementation of a Jordanian-Qatari cultural, educational and scientific agreement for the years 1994 through 1996 (Petra photo)

Aqaba Ports Corporation to start second phase of dust control

AMMAN (J.T.I) — As of the beginning of 1995 the Aqaba Ports Corporation (APC) will start the second phase of a pollution elimination project targeting phosphate dust pollution, according to Youssef Salah, director of the port's platforms and quays.

Mr. Salah, an engineer, said phosphate dust falls during the loading of the mineral from stores to shipping vessels.

Speaking at a ceremony held in Aqaba to mark the Arab Environment Day Saturday, Mr. Salah said the APC has succeeded in eliminating nearly 90 per cent of the falling dust through the installation of two choke

feeder systems (dust control devices) at the cost of \$500,000 in the past year.

The second phase, he said, entails cutting down on dust pollution resulting from the unloading of phosphates from transport trucks to the stores at the harbour. He added that this phase is expected to cost JD 250,000.

A third phase, according to Mr. Salah, will seek to eliminate dust pollution from the transport of phosphate by trains to the stores, at an expected cost of JD 500,000.

Last year trains carried 2.5 million tonnes of phosphate for export from the country's mines to the harbour, according to APC sources.

With regard to cement ex-

ports, Mr. Salah said the APC has already set up covered quays to prevent dust from rising during the unloading and loading of the product.

Aqaba Mayor Mohammad Al Azab, who told the meeting that the port city suffered particularly from dust due to the northerly winds blowing towards the city, said that his office has been allocating JD 200,000 annually towards clean-up campaigns.

He also said that the municipality has been allocating JD 120,000 each year for the plantation of trees and the cultivation of gardens to help purify and beautify the Aqaba area.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Envoy presents credentials to King Harald

OSLO (Petra) — Jordan's 900-resident ambassador to Norway, Samir Khalifeh, presented his credentials to King Harald V in Oslo on Friday and conveyed to the Norwegian monarch greetings from His Majesty King Hussein and his best wishes to the Norwegian people.

Iraqi-Jordanian Transport Company meets in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (Petra) — The joint Iraqi-Jordanian Land Transport Company's board of directors Saturday met in Baghdad under the chairmanship of general manager, Awad Tall, to discuss an executive plan for the company's operations. Discussion will cover a report about operations in 1993 and prospects for increasing the company's fleet of trucks.

Visiting Iraqi minister visits university

AMMAN (Petra) — Visiting Iraqi Minister of Higher Education Hamad Abdul Khaleq and his delegation Saturday visited the University of Jordan and discussed cooperation with University's Vice President Mohammad Maqsood. The Iraqi minister later called at the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) and discussed cooperation in technological fields.

Disl residents submit demands to government

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the residents of Disl and four neighbouring settlements in the southern Jordanian desert called Saturday on Minister of State Abdullah Jazi and presented their requests to the government. The delegation asked that the government speed up plans for the distribution of land and for carrying out agricultural projects. They also demanded that private companies currently developing lands in their area employ local workers rather than workers from other areas.

Conference on cancer to open

AMMAN (Petra) — A three-day Jordanian Medical Conference opens at the University of Jordan on Tuesday to discuss cancer, according to an announcement Saturday by the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA), the meeting's organizer.

Planned in cooperation with the university, the conference is expected to discuss 150 working papers dealing with early detection of cancer and cancer prevention, according to Nabih Muammar, head of the conference's executive committee.

Dr. Muammar said that the conference was planned to precede the formal opening later this year of the Al Amal Cancer Centre near the University of Jordan and in view of the need to focus public attention on the need to combat this disease and contribute to financing the treatment of cancer patients.

Dr. Muammar said an exhibition of medical equipment and drugs used in the treatment of cancer will be opened at the university during the conference.

Women's organisations in battle over name

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordan Women's Union (JWU) recently issued a statement condemning what it sees as slanderous attacks on the union since changing its name last April.

The statement said that the union had been subjected to a hostile campaign, including accusations of embezzlement within the union.

"We assure every one that the union's financial documents, reports and the annual budget are clear and precise and have been conducted according to the union's by-laws, and we can prove it," said Asma Khader,

president of the JWU.

In addition, Ms. Khader said that since the name alteration, the union has been excluded from major events.

On July 28, the union officially changed its name from the Jordanian Women's Union to the Jordanian Woman's Union. The change was effectively minor, from the plural, women's to the singular, woman's.

The union's move came in response to a Ministry of Social Development request to either merge with the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) or change its name. The union opted for the name change.

Ms. Khader said hostilities reached a peak when the GFJW filed a law suit against

the JWU as well as against Minister of Interior Salameh Hamad, who had signed the approval for the JWU's name and by-law changes.

Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, president of the GFJW, told the Jordan Times that there were several reasons why her organisation filed suit.

First, she said that the name change caused confusion among people, and "they can not distinguish between the two unions any more."

She also said that "the Minister of Interior is not the concerned authority to register or change the name and internal laws of such unions."

She added that the word "union" does not apply to the JWU because it accepts sing-

le memberships. And, according to Dr. Abu Ghazaleh, "unions usually accept group members, not individual membership, hence, the name union should not apply to the JWU, and instead they should be referred to as a society."

Ms. Khader, on the other hand said that the word "union" applies perfectly to the JWU, and that "the GFJW should actually change its name because they only accept group memberships."

"Any woman can join our union, but the GFJW only accepts group members," Ms. Khader told the Jordan Times.

She added that the JWU has been registered as a union since 1974, while the

GFJW was registered in 1982.

"I don't understand why the GFJW is arguing about our registration, we were registered nearly eight years before they even existed," Ms. Khader said.

According to Dr. Abu Ghazaleh, the GFJW had asked the JWU to merge with them and suggested changing a section in the GFJW by-laws to accept the JWU, but the union refused the idea.

But Ms. Khader maintained that it was she who had suggested the merger, and that it was the GFJW who had refused.

The case will be heard in court on Oct. 22, Ms. Khader said.

Czech envoy sees hope for expansion of bilateral ties

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The potential for regional stability in the wake of the Middle East peace process, and the transformation of the Czech Republic to a democratic, parliamentary constitution, augurs well for the intensification of relations between Jordan and the republic, Czech Charge d'Affaires Karel Risinger told the Jordan Times.

"Relations with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan have always been friendly. We believe that conditions are now very favourable for an expansion of relations in different fields of cooperation — in trade, cultural exchange, education etc.," said Mr. Risinger.

"The Czech Republic has traditionally maintained intensive relations with the Arab World, which is geographically located so close to Europe and the stability of which has been considered in our country as very important, not just for this region but for Europe as well."

"The Czech Republic has, from the very beginning, welcomed the idea of the peace process and has expressed its support to the parties actively involved in the talks since the Madrid conference (October 1991)," he added.

The Czech Republic will be celebrating its national day on Oct. 28.

Despite more than six years of Nazi occupation and 40 years of communist rule, Mr. Risinger says that the Czech nation has always considered the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 as the beginning of its contemporary statehood.

At the end of 1989, "the constitution of the country was changed, thus legally terminating the role of the Communist Party as 'the leading force' in the society," Mr. Risinger said.

Since the 1989 election of Vaclav Havel as President of Czechoslovakia, economic transformation, including privatisation, liberalisation of prices, foreign trade and currency exchange rates, abolition of state

subsidies and other measures, has necessitated the passing of parliamentary bills and the introduction of institutions organised to serve the transformation's needs, Mr. Risinger told the Jordan Times.

In spite of reduced trade with other ex-communist countries and the upheavals caused by economic transformation, the Czech economy has become very stable: the foreign exchange rate has maintained the same value since January 1991; foreign trade is balanced, as is the country's budget.

Unemployment has been retained below 3.5-4 per cent, and this year the country expects to witness 1-2 per cent growth of gross domestic product (GDP), he said.

Mr. Risinger said that the Czech deputy minister of finance recently visited Jordan and "conducted very useful talks with Minister of Finance Sami Gammo and the Ministry of Trade secretary-general."

Currently, bilateral trade

is small. Mr. Risinger estimated that Czech exports to Jordan stand at \$8.5 million annually, while Jordanian exports to the republic account for "some several hundred thousand dollars."

The main Jordanian import from the Czech Republic is small cars, he added.

Regarding foreign debts, he said that Jordan had no standing debts with the republic.

Mr. Risinger also said, "the Czech Republic's current position of development is not conducive to aiding projects here."

In relation to encouraging Czech investment in Jordan he said, "the stability of the region is one incentive, but the two countries need to gain experience of one another as neither the Czech market nor Jordanian companies are well-known."

In the past, the republic provided educational scholarships to Jordan. Mr. Risinger said he hopes to reintroduce similar scholarships next year.

"I really admire the high level of education evident in the Kingdom and I find the cultural side of life fascinating," he said.

In another bid to strengthen ties, Mr. Risinger hopes to promote cultural exchanges, the first of which is to take place on Sunday when the Kubelik Trio from Prague will play at the Royal Cultural Centre.

He also mentioned the possibility of Czech archaeologists, like those involved in projects in Egypt, embarking on projects here.

Other political and economic government-level delegations are planned for the future.

"We believe that the exchange of delegations will follow in favour of better mutual understanding and promotion of intensive cooperation," Mr. Risinger concluded.

Mr. Risinger, who was appointed charge d'affaires last December, was the first assigned Czech representative to the Kingdom in two and a half years.

'The Lights of Jericho' illuminate a dying nation

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The radio play, "The Lights of Jericho," faces a task which has proved extremely difficult for Arab artists — addressing Western audiences about what is taking place on the other side of the Jordan River.

Scepticism over the chances of this drama is raised by the fact that despite the repeated attempts of many capable people before now, Western audiences in general continue to demonstrate only lukewarm sympathy for the Palestinians, for various reasons. But to shut off all hope that the ghostly voices inhabiting the soundtrack of "The Lights of Jericho" will ever be heard may still be premature — they are desperate, they have teeth, and they bite.

Never mind that the stage performance of the drama in Darat Al Funun, which expanded on the original radio soundtrack with choreographed actor-

narrators and a backdrop of slide-projector photographs, was extremely rough-hewn.

And never mind that the theme was clichéd, perhaps, for a Jordanian audience which has long been all too familiar with what has become of what once was Palestine some 50 years ago.

The original English-language radio soundtrack, done by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, nevertheless punched through all that with its birds-eye portrayal of a nation which is slowly and irrevocably dying.

This slow, quiet extinction, marked by only occasional acts of truly spectacular bloodletting and instead leaving its tracks quietly, inch by inch, as villages and neighbourhoods fade out one by one, is perhaps the most eerie aspect of what has happened over the last century.

Until now, few Arab artists have managed to trace its shadow in a coherent manner for target audiences in the West.

So far, the denizens of playwright and actress Haya Hussein's drama, villagers and farmers who can only wait and watch inside their houses under curfew as their homes, cropfields and children slowly vanish, have managed to gain some success for their playwright.

"The Lights of Jericho" has won two official prizes in Western arenas — the Prix Italia award as a radio drama, and another from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation itself.

The battle for Arab artists who are putting forth such Western-oriented works on the Palestinian issue remains locked on an uphill course, but Ms. Hussein's play regains hope that future years may yet bring some successes in this severely difficult area of endeavour.

Ghassan Kanafani's literary work "Men Under the Sun" should be mentioned, as the performance brochure printed by Darat Al Funun mentions it as the inspiration for the play's material.

WHAT'S GOING ON

SEMINAR

★ Seminar entitled "Social and Political Structures in the Orient and Occident" with the participation of Dr. Volker Perthes, Dr. Arnold Rottger, and Dr. Mohammad Khair Mustafa at Abdul Hameed Sharaf Auditorium, University of Jordan at 3:30 p.m.

CONCERT

★ Concert by Czech Kubelik Trio with violinist Jan Talich, cellist Karel Fiala, and pianist Kvita Blynska at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

FILM

★ Film entitled "Arachnophobia" at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

PLAY

★ Play entitled "A Journey Through American Comedy" by the Artists Repertory Group at Prince Hassan Auditorium, University of Jordan at 8:00 p.m.

LECTURE

★ Lecture in Arabic entitled "Has the Time Come for Lifting the Sanctions Imposed on the Iraqi People — the Available Options" by Dr. Ghassan Al Atiyah at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jahal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

Britain to speak to Sinn Fein soon — top unionist

BELFAST (R) — Britain will talk to the IRA's political allies by Christmas, a leading Northern Ireland Protestant politician said Saturday.

The British Broadcasting Corporation said James Molyneux, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, told it in an interview he believed London would open exploratory talks by Christmas with Sinn Fein and politicians close to Protestant guerrillas.

Sinn Fein is the political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which proclaimed a ceasefire in its 25-year campaign against British rule in Northern Ireland on Sept. 1.

Britain wants to be convinced the decision is permanent before setting up talks.

On Friday, Protestant guerrilla forces harrying to keep the province British also announced a ceasefire, opening up the best prospects for an all-round peace that Northern Ireland has seen in

25 years.

The BBC said he had disclosed that, in the lead-up to the Protestant guerrillas' ceasefire, he had consultations with so-called "loyalist" politicians who were close to the guerrillas.

Mr. Molyneux, a consistent opponent of extremist violence on both sides of the Northern Ireland conflict, said he felt it is his duty to speak with them.

"If I hadn't done that and if another hundred people had been murdered before Christmas, I couldn't have lived with my conscience," he said.

Political sources say he gave the loyalist politicians vital assurances which helped clinch the Protestant ceasefire.

They say he assured them Northern Ireland's links with Britain were safe and British Prime Minister John Major was not going to force the province into unity with the Catholic-dominated Republic

of Ireland.

The BBC said Mr. Molyneux also forecast that Northern Ireland would have its own elected assembly next year as part of new government structures for the region.

Gerry Adams, the head of Sinn Fein, accused Britain Friday of slowing down the search for peace in Northern Ireland by refusing to hold early talks with his party.

Mr. Major, speaking on the day when Protestant guerrillas joined an all-round ceasefire in Northern Ireland, said there was an opportunity for peace but he would not be rushed into decisions on the way forward.

Mr. Adams called on Mr. Major not to delay the next phase of the peace process — talks with Sinn Fein. Sinn Fein has been promised a seat at talks on the future of the province within three months of a "permanent" IRA ceasefire.

"Together with the Dublin

government, it (Britain) should initiate peace talks immediately involving all parties and covering all aspects of relationships on these islands," Mr. Adams, who is in New York, said in a statement issued in Belfast.

"Instead of trying to slow down the process of change, the British government should be seeking to move it forward in a pro-active manner which allows the people of Ireland to reach a democratic agreement."

All sides in battle-scarred Northern Ireland applauded the decisions of the rival guerrilla groups to lay down their arms and pursue their objectives through politics.

The truce announcement by two outlawed Protestant guerrilla groups, the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) and Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), underpinned peace prospects seven weeks after the Irish Republican Army gave up its 25-year guerrilla war to end British rule.



French Industry Minister Gérard Longuet (centre) leaves Matignon, French prime minister's residence, after he announced his resignation at a meeting with French President Edouard Balladur. Mr. Longuet resigned amid allegations of corruption involving the financing of his holiday home and other accusations involving party funds. Speaking on the Matignon steps, he said he intended to prove his innocence (AFP photo)

Balladur hopes cabinet minister's departure will ease pressure

PARIS (R) — Prime minister Edouard Balladur, his government and his presidential aspirations shaken by a growing corruption scandal, hopes his troubles are behind him with the resignation of Industry Minister Gérard Longuet.

But politicians and analysts said new problems could lie ahead. Other cabinet members' names have surfaced in connection with a series of corruption probes plaguing the Balladur government in recent weeks.

A planned cabinet shakeup could further rattle the public's view of the prime minister — and of his suitability to lead France — seven months before presidential elections in which he is expected to be a candidate.

open question as to whether the right, which came to power after a rout of the Socialists in 1993 because of corruption scandals on the left and high unemployment, would be able to recover.

Mr. Longuet, 48, resigned Friday after coming under investigation in corruption probes involving a holiday villa and the finances of his Republican Party.

"I don't want to contribute, one way or another, to a weakening of the government," he told reporters after a brief meeting with Mr. Balladur.

A bitter Longuet, whose powerful portfolio covered industry, foreign trade, energy, telecommunications and postal services, told reporters on the steps of the prime minister's office: "I have been condemned before being given a hearing."

His departure capped a disastrous week for Mr. Balladur, whose former communications minister, Alain Carignon, was jailed Wednesday on suspicion of accepting bribes.

Opinion polls showed Socialist European Commission President Jacques Delors has virtually caught up with Mr. Balladur in the undeclared race to succeed President Francois Mitterrand, while Gaullist leader Jacques Chirac, Mr. Balladur's main rival on the right, set up a shadow campaign staff.

In a statement, Mr. Balladur praised Mr. Longuet's "effective and dynamic action" and said he understood why he was resigning.

Earlier Friday a businessman told the judge probing Republican Party funding that he had negotiated an under-the-table cash payment with Mr. Longuet in connection with the purchase of the party's Paris headquarters.

Five other ministers in the Balladur cabinet have been named in the media as figuring in graft probes or failing to distance themselves from corruption.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said unequivocally last month that Islamabad possessed the nuclear bomb.

India, which exploded a nuclear device in 1974, insists its nuclear programme is peaceful and says it has taken a deliberate decision not to acquire nuclear weapons.

Many Western countries, including the United States, describe India as a nuclear-capable country, meaning that it could assemble a nuclear bomb at short notice if necessary.

For India, its ability to launch satellites is also a matter of prestige, of proving to the world that its scientific community stands at par with the best.

But even at home there is constant criticism of the expense of the programme. Many say the money should be spent on social issues in a country of 900 million containing a majority of the world's people who live in absolute poverty.

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In May this year a slightly more powerful version of the rocket known as the augmented satellite launch vehicle put a satellite into orbit without problems.

India says the \$135 million PSLV is for purely peaceful purposes and is part of its ambitious plans to join the commercial space club of countries which can charge high fees to launch satellites.

Some other countries, however, see it as an intercontinental ballistic missile, despite India's frequent denials that will ever be used to carry warheads.

India is developing several short-to medium-range missiles. Old enemy Pakistan, for one, believes the PSLV is designed ultimately to give Delhi a full range of missiles.

The two countries have fought three wars since independence from Britain in 1947 and former Pakistani

Indian rocket puts satellite into space

SRIHARIKOTA, India (R) — India successfully launched a satellite into orbit Saturday aboard an experimental rocket which it hopes will bring it membership of the elite club of space nations.

Scientists at the launch control centre at Sriharikota, on the coast of the southern state of Tamil Nadu near Madras, were jubilant as the polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV) took an 870 kg remote sensing satellite into orbit.

"It's a great, great day for us, a great day for ISRO, a great day for the country," said K. Kasturiraman, head of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

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Many critics also say membership would cost Finland dearly in lost agricultural output as its farmers faced lower EU producer prices.

The country's proximity to a potentially unstable Russia, with much lower standards of living, is seen as one reason why Finns are more pro-EU than their Nordic neighbours.

But there are also those who oppose joining on security grounds, saying Finland would give up its neutrality and risk becoming an early victim of any confrontation between East and West.

The Finnish centre-right government of Prime Minister Esko Aho has repeatedly stressed that Finland in no way feels threatened, and would retain its policy of military non-alignment and independent defence as an EU member.

Finns expected to back EU membership in poll

HELSINKI (R) — Finns face what is seen as their most important peacetime since independence nearly 80 years ago when they vote Sunday on whether to join the European Union (EU) next year.

If the people say "yes" and parliament gives final approval, as appears likely, the EU would expand into the Arctic and would have a 1,270 kilometres order with Russia.

"Finns will make a historic choice," Helsinki Sanomat, Finland's largest newspaper, said in an editorial Saturday.

"We can as a nation ourselves choose what group of European peoples we want to belong to," it said.

The Nordic nation of five million, on the northern rim of Europe and bigger in size than EU members Britain and Italy, seems set to vote in favour of joining the 12-nation grouping.

An opinion poll published by Helsinki Sanomat Saturday said 47 per cent supported membership, 28 per cent were opposed and the rest had not yet made up their minds.

About 30 per cent of eligible voters, or 1,198,822 Finns, have already made their choice, voting in advance at remote post offices around the vast country between Oct. 5 and 11.

If there is a "yes" vote, a two-thirds majority in parliament is then required for final approval, but the legislature is expected to follow the outcome of the referendum.

Sunday's referendum, following a lively debate largely focused on economy, sovereignty and security, is the first among the three Nordic EU applicants.

Austria, the fourth country seeking membership on Jan. 1, voted overwhelmingly for membership in June.

The vote takes place as Finland is recovering from its deepest peacetime depression since independence from Russia in 1917.

Gross domestic product, which plunged almost 15 per cent in three years, is expected to grow by 3.5 per cent this year. However unemployment, 17.1 per cent in August, is likely to stay high.

Finland, which had one of the fastest growing economies in the West in the late 1980s, was hit hard by the collapse of the Soviet market and by weak Western export markets.

Those in favour of joining, including much of the political and economic establishment, say it would help boost the economy and would also show that Finland, situated between East and West, clearly belonged to Western Europe.

"Joining the European Union would stabilise our international position. That is the single most important thing," Paavo Lippinen, chairman of the opposition Social Democratic Party, told Reuters this week.

Those against membership say Finland would give up decision-making powers to bureaucrats in Brussels, the EU capital.

"I foresee a sharp decline in the degree of democracy on

accession to the union," leading opponent Jan-Magnus Jansson wrote in a newspaper column Saturday.

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Simpson jury selection pace quickens

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Leaks of false information haven't damaged O.J. Simpson's right to a fair trial, and the unmasking of lies may have helped his case, a judge said Friday in refusing a defence request to explore news leaks.

But Superior Court Judge Lance Ito also dealt a blow to the prosecution. He refused to reopen the issue of whether there were tactical delays in sending evidence — including a bloody glove found behind Simpson's estate — out for DNA testing.

Judge Ito said he had clearly indicated to the prosecution's DNA expert, "you are about to lose" and she had failed, to present further arguments to dissuade him from throwing out some of the evidence.

Deputy District Attorney Marcia Clark asked Judge Ito if prosecutors could supplement the record. But the judge was unmoved. "How often do I have to hear these arguments?" he asked.

He promised to rule Monday on whether the DNA tests on the blood from glove, blood in Simpson's Bronco and blood on Simpson's driveway will be allowed.

Judge Ito also refused to convene a hearing on a defence motion to find the source of persistent news leaks.

"Before conducting a hearing I would have to find some prejudice to the defendant or that his rights are being trampled upon," Judge Ito said. "I think it is to his benefit that false reports in the press have been unmasked, from the ski mask to the entrenching tool to the false DNA reports."

Simpson's lawyers had subpoenaed two members of a TV news team, the police chief and his spokesman to try to find the source of the leaks they contend have prejudiced Simpson's chances for a fair trial.

Simpson, a former football great, television sports commentator and movie star, has pleaded innocent to murder charges in the June 12 slaying deaths of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend, Ronald Goldman.

The hearing came after a half-day of jury selection, during which prospective jurors were pressed to reveal their feelings about Simpson and to discuss the tape recording of a call to Emergency Services, 911, in which Simpson's ex-wife pleaded for help.

"Do you think some people are just prone to call the police just because they over-react?" lead defence attorney Robert Shapiro asked a 63-year-old retired engineer.

"I imagine some of the calls to 911 fall into that category," the man said.

Judge Ito and lawyers screened five potential panelists in a half-day session, bringing to eight the number of people who have been questioned. He sent prospects home until Monday.

During questioning, the prospects seemed familiar with Simpson's fame — although one non-sports fan said she thought Simpson was a basketball player.

Manila blames Communist rebels for talks collapse

AMSTERDAM (R) — Peace talks in the Netherlands between the Philippine government and Communist rebels have collapsed, with Manila accusing the insurgents of acting in bad faith.

The five-man government panel, in a statement issued in Amsterdam and released in Manila, said the rebels used a demand for safety guarantees for their men to seek "full equality" in negotiations.

"We gave them every guarantee for safety and immunity that they required, without compromising the sovereignty of the republic, but this was rejected," the statement said.

The panel accused the Communists of acting "in manifest bad faith" and added: "The attempt by the (rebels) to sabotage the peace negotiations and cause a collapse of the talks is clear for everyone to see."

The Communists in turn accused the government of renegeing on issues of safety guarantees and immunity from prosecution.

They said the government tabled a "patronising" proposal violating the spirit of equality in a joint declaration drawn up when talks began in 1992.

"As far as we are concerned it is not possible to continue talks under the current circumstances," the rebels' chief negotiator Luis Jalandoni told Reuters in a telephone interview from their base in the central Dutch town of Utrecht.

Negotiations between the two sides, repeatedly held up by disputes, had aimed to forge a common agenda for formal negotiations to end the 24-year-old insurgency.

The collapse of the talks, the third round of preliminary discussions, is not expected to lead to renewed major fighting in the Philippines. The number of rebels has declined sharply to less than 7,000 from a peak of over 25,000 in 1987.

The Communist movement has split in the last year, with most rebel leaders in the Philippines joining their own group. This larger group has told the government it would be willing to open preliminary talks.

Philby spy ring's 'fifth man' was Rothschild — book

LONDON (R) — Lord Rothschild, a scientist and member of the famous banking family, was the mysterious "fifth man" in the British spy ring headed by notorious double agent Kim Philby, according to a book to be published this month.

The Fifth Man, by Australian journalist Roland Perry, claims that Rothschild, who died in 1990, escaped suspicion that he could have been a member of the famous Cambridge University ring of spies by using his considerable wealth and influence.

The motives and methods of the upper-class British spy ring have fascinated the world for decades. The names of Harold "Kim" Philby, Anthony Blunt, Gny Burgess and Donald MacLean are virtually synonymous with spying and treachery, but the identity of a possible fifth member of their circle has never been confirmed.

Former British civil servant John Cairncross has been named several times as the "fifth man." Mr. Cairncross, who lives in France, has in the past admitted spying for Moscow, but denied any involvement in the Cambridge ring.

Mr. Perry, who details how he spent years trying to track down the identity of the missing spy, dismisses the notion that Mr. Cairncross was the much sought-after agent.

"Even if all his stolen data had been acted on by the KGB (the Soviet Intelligence Service), Cairncross did not pass on enough documentation of significance," Mr. Perry wrote in the book, to be published by MacMillan on Oct. 21.

"In fact, by 1947 he was regarded as 'dead' or useless by the KGB," he added.

Mr. Perry said he gained many of his clues from KGB master spy Yuri Ivanovitch Modin, who claimed to have controlled many British agents during the long years of the cold war. He said Mr. Modin did not name Baron Rothschild but gave him enough information to narrow the field.

"The interviews in Moscow

made it clear the fifth man had some scientific training. He had built up an expertise in biological and nuclear weapons research," Mr. Perry wrote.

"He worked for (the British Intelligence Service) MI5 during the war. He had a connection to (former Prime Minister Winston) Churchill."

Nathaniel Mayer Victor Rothschild, the third Baron Rothschild, fitted the bill, Mr. Perry claims.

"According to two MI5 sources, in 1942 Victor Rothschild became MI5's security inspector, which allowed him into every major research centre. He knew in detail about all British (and often U.S.) weapons developments."

All Mr. Perry's sources agreed the fifth man went on to have a successful business and public career. Baron Rothschild, who succeeded his uncle as Baron Rothschild in 1937, was an accomplished sportsman, jazz musician, scientist, writer and businessman.

Accusations against Baron Rothschild are nothing new.

At Cambridge University in the 1930s he joined an exclusive debating society known as the Apostles which included Burgess, MacLean, Philby and Blunt. During World War II Burgess, Blunt and Philby used his London apartment and he sometimes visited a drinking club where Philby, Burgess and Blunt were regulars.

Baron Rothschild worked for British military intelligence during World War II and was known to have left-wing sympathies.

In 1986 some parliamentarians called for investigations into whether Baron Rothschild had also been a Soviet spy. Then-Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher dismissed the speculation and Baron Rothschild strongly denied the allegations.

Mr. Perry said Baron Rothschild used his position and power to deflect further suspicions after Burgess and MacLean defected to Russia in 1951.

Berlusconi heads for home after Russia visit

MOSCOW (AFP) — Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi headed for home Saturday after a three-day trip to Russia marked by the signing of a cooperation and friendship treaty.

Mr. Berlusconi and his wife Veronica were seen off at Moscow's Vnukovo Airport by Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets and his wife, ITAR-TASS reported.

Earlier, the Italian premier had attended mass in Moscow's Catholic cathedral and gone on a brief walkabout in the city.

Italy is Moscow's second largest creditor and second largest commercial partner after Germany.

President Yeltsin and Mr. Berlusconi signed a friendship and cooperation treaty here in a bid to replace a healthy economic relations and ended their first summit with an appeal for European unity.

The two leaders also pledged their countries would "cooperate efficiently against organised crime, drugs trafficking and all forms of contraband," ITAR-TASS quoted their accord as saying.

Mr. Yeltsin said Friday's treaty, which replaces a 1989 Soviet-Italian pact, constitutes "a good basis" for future cooperation. He also welcomed the "extremely dynamic" nature of trade between Russia and Italy, praising the quality of Italian goods and technology.

At an evening gala dinner in the Kremlin, Mr. Yeltsin called for a "Europe without barriers, without divisions between its elected (representatives) and the rest," ITAR-TASS said.

Warning to his theme, the Russian leader adapted the electoral slogan with which Mr. Berlusconi's Forza Italia took power earlier this year, to propose a toast of "Forza Europa."

Finns expected to back EU membership in poll

HELSINKI (R) — Finns face what is seen as their most important peacetime since independence nearly 80 years ago when they vote Sunday on whether to join the European Union (EU) next year.

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12-year-old jailed for withholding diary

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida (AFP) — A 12-year-old girl was handcuffed and jailed for refusing a judge's order to hand over her diary as evidence in the trial of her father, a detective, whom she accused of molesting her.

Judge Robert Carney sentenced the girl to five days in juvenile detention for contempt of court, but promptly released her on appeal, her lawyer Howard Finkelstein said Thursday. The diary, requested by defence lawyers, apparently contains no mention of the alleged molestation, which could favour the father's plea of innocence.

"There's nothing in this diary but little girl thoughts," Mr. Finkelstein said. Judge Carney said he was trying to send a message to the girl for refusing to hand over her diary on three separate occasions since August. Judge Carney removed himself from the case after the girl said she was afraid of him. The trial has been delayed until a new judge is appointed. The identities of the girl and her father were not released. He was suspended from the police force with pay after he was arrested last year and charged with indecent assault, which carries a maximum prison sentence of seven years.

Court allows man to call himself Devil Christ Jesus

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Swedish country court Wednesday overturned a decision denying a Swede the right to prefix his name with Belial Christ Jesus, translated literally from Hebrew as The Devil Christ Jesus. The Swedish tax authorities, who must approve all namings and name changes, had denied the 22-year-old man's request because the names would be offensive. Belial is the Hebrew name used in the Old Testament for the Devil. The Orebro district court overruled and said that the names would not be offensive as very few Swedes would understand the meaning.

"The interesting thing in the case is whether the name would offend an individual. It's all about how the general public would perceive it — in Sweden there are very few who understand what Belial means," Orebro county councillor Tommy Svensson said.

Wife offers heart in wedding vows

SAN DIEGO, California (AFP) — Victoria Ingram pledged her heart to Randall Curlee as well as her kidney during a hospital wedding service Tuesday. For Curlee, 46, a diabetic in need of a kidney replacement, Ingram's wedding gift could be one that lasts a lifetime. "I just can't express it," Curlee said after the wedding. "What it means to me — it's really too much." The two were engaged last February before doctors discovered diabetes had harmed his kidney to the point where he needed a new one. Luckily for the couple, tests on Ingram, 45, indicated she was a good match. "I'd say the chances of winning the lottery were better than having her be a good match," said the couple's surgeon, doctor Robert Mendez.

Shanghai to ban smoking in all public places

SHANGHAI (R) — Shanghai will ban smoking in all indoor public places starting on Dec. 1, the Wenhui Daily reported Friday. No-smoking signs will be posted in cinemas, theatres, concert halls, indoor sports arenas, libraries, museums, art galleries, exhibition centres, hospitals and kindergartens in China's largest city. Smokers also will be barred from lighting up in large shops and on public transport, the newspaper said. Members of the public can tell smokers to extinguish their cigarettes in these areas and demand that management take action to enforce the rules. "Delinquent units will be warned, given a limited period to correct, forced to stop operation or fined," the newspaper reported. China has one of the world's highest smoking rates among its 1.2 billion population and there is alarm at the mounting cost of treating smoking-related diseases. Previous civic campaigns in Shanghai have had mixed success. A ban this year on vehicles sounding their horns was completely ignored.

World
Over 2,000
ex-soldiers
train for
Rwanda's
new army

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KIGALI (AFP) — More than 2,000 soldiers from Rwanda's former army, defeated in July by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), are training at a camp at Gako in the south in order to join the country's new military, U.N. officials said Saturday in Kigali.

Rwandan Vice-President and Defence Minister Paul Kagame said Wednesday that a high number of former soldiers who had left the country after their defeat in three months of conflict have decided to return to Rwanda for "political education."

General Kagame did not specify how many former soldiers were returning.

The U.N. Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) commander, General Guy Tuzi, visited the Gako military camp Friday and called it a "reorganisation school," in a U.N. statement. UNAMIR military spokesman Captain Stephane Grenier said.

"Although the United Nations force in Rwanda comprises troops from 29 nations, we can only play a small part in the rebuilding process of Rwanda," Gen. Tuzi said, telling the troops that "the solution is yours. You have demonstrated a great deal of courage by joining this new national army."

Capt. Grenier said that there are 78 officers at the Gako camp.

The soldiers of the former Hutu-dominated army, who were refugees in Zaire or in the former French bantustan zone in southwest Rwanda, decided to rejoin the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), the military wing of the Tutsi-led RPF.

Some 20,000 former army troops are still in refugee camps, where some have expressed a desire to return and serve in the new armed forces.

The RPF accuses some former soldiers and extremist Hutu militias of the massacre of up to a million people in the weeks after Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed in a suspicious plane crash on April 6.

Capt. Grenier also said that the arrival over the last 10 days of some 800 Tunisian soldiers had brought the strength of U.N. mission to 5,433 men, almost the full strength of 5,500 envisaged by the Security Council in May.

A further 700 Zambian and 800 Indian troops are expected in the next few weeks, but UNAMIR will only be over strength for a transition period before 580 British troops leave in November and 364 Canadians in January, he added.

Apart from Tunisia, whose 846 men are mainly deployed in the northwest of the central African highland nation, the largest contingents are those from Ghana (819 men) and Ethiopia (800 men).

UNAMIR was set up in October 1993 to oversee a Rwandan peace accord signed in August that year between the government and the RPF, which had launched its incursion from Uganda in 1990.

Many RPF troops were long-term Tutsi exiles who had served in the Ugandan army. The peace pact, left largely in tatters when the latest bloodletting began, provided for the kind of power-sharing now in practice, though the late President Habyarimana's party is excluded.

Meanwhile, the Security Council asked Rwanda's government Friday to work for national reconciliation, and said regional stabilisation depended on refugees' returning home.

The council said in a statement adopted by consensus that it was deeply concerned about the fate of millions of refugees and displaced people in Rwanda and neighbouring countries who fled from ethnic bloodshed since April.

It also condemned acts of intimidation and violence it said were continuing in refugee camps to try to deter people from returning to their homes.

And it praised the governments of Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi for their commitment to helping to settle the problems from which refugees were fleeing.

The council also urged the new Tutsi-led Rwandan government to continue its dialogue with all political groups in Rwanda.

Bosnian Serb shelling again blocks Sarajevo aid convoys

SARAJEVO (R) — The United Nations closed the main aid route from the Adriatic to Sarajevo Saturday for the second day running after evacuating about 30 old people from a refugee camp hit when Bosnian Serb forces shelled the road.

Workers from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) completed the evacuation and tried to reopen the road between Mostar and Jablanica at 5 a.m. (0400 GMT). They were forced to close it again when the bombardment resumed a short time later.

"I think they have seen us evacuating the refugees," said Jerry Hulme of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. "They believe the targets are now fair targets."

Two shells hit the Potoci refugee camp, located seven kilometres north of Mostar, during the shelling Friday.

Most of the camp inmates were residents of Mostar who fled the southern Bosnian town during fighting earlier this year between Muslims and Croats who have since observed a ceasefire.

The area has come under increasing attack from Bosnian Serbs.

The renewed shelling blocked three food convoys on their way to Sarajevo, where rations are counted in days.

The U.N. aid network in Bosnia and attempts to build up stocks before winter have been severely disrupted by Serb retaliation for a NATO air strike on Sept. 22.

U.N. peacekeepers admitted there were still 500 troops of the Muslim-led Bosnian

government army on Mount Igman in the demilitarised zone around the capital despite attempts to dislodge them.

The Bosnian Serb Army has given the United Nations until Oct. 20 to clear the slopes and destroy Muslim fortifications before intervening itself.

Tim Spicer of the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) said 650 government soldiers had left but 500 remained.

"There is a group that is proving difficult to persuade to leave... we believe it is possible that the commander of this particular, rather stubborn group may be acting on his own initiative."

The United Nations said it expected an upsurge of fighting in the Gorazde pocket east of Sarajevo after learning that the local hospital had been instructed to make space available in its wards.

"We believe there is likely to be an increase in military activity during the course of the next few days," Lt. Col. Spicer said.

Bosnian Serb forces almost overran the U.N.-protected safe haven of Gorazde town this year but were forced to halt their offensive under threat of NATO air strikes.

The town is surrounded by Serb infantry forces occupying a 20-kilometre radius heavy-weapons-exclusion zone monitored by the United Nations.

NATO has become concerned that long gaps between violations of exclusion zones in Bosnia and the go-ahead to conduct air strikes are endangering its pilots.

alliance sources said Friday.

"We have been lucky up until now that no pilots have been killed," one source said.

The comment came as a high-level group of NATO officials was headed to New York to persuade United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali to adopt a tougher air strike policy in Bosnia, including cutting down on response time.

The officials, led by NATO Assistant Secretary-General Anthony Craig, are to meet Dr. Ghali Monday.

"They will encourage the United Nations to approve a new strategy," the source said.

NATO, worried about its credibility, wants to avoid having to negotiate with the U.N. each time there is a violation in Bosnian exclusion zones, such as around Sarajevo.

It also wants to be allowed to prepare a wider range of targets.

This is necessary, NATO sources say, to ensure that there will be retaliation even if a specific target is covered by cloud or otherwise unavailable.

Regarding the safety of its pilots, NATO is particularly keen to do away with long warning periods between a violation and an air strike.

No NATO pilots have been killed in action over former Yugoslavia, but one British plane was shot down earlier in the year, its pilot parachuted to safety.

Dr. Ghali has responded to the ambassador's letter saying he has some problems with the requests.

U.N. sources have said

their major fear is that more robust action would mean hitting targets in areas not related to where the offensive took place, leading to further confrontations.

NATO sources say they believe the U.N., as well as worrying about the safety of its blue helmet troops in Bosnia, also fears it will lose control of the military option.

The sources said, however, that NATO simply wants to make its air strike policy more efficient and has no intention of taking over control from the U.N.

"NATO has always said it will use the dual key," said another source.

"Dual key" is NATO jargon for the current system under which U.N. commanders call in a NATO air strike.

U.N. officials said earlier this week that a possible compromise between NATO desires and U.N. concerns could include a more rapid response when offences occurred and more damage to the offending unit and weapons system.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic firmly rejected Friday a proposal by French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe to authorise Bosnian Serbs to form a confederation with Serbia.

In a letter addressed to France's partners in the five-nation contact group, Mr. Izetbegovic said that the "parliament of Bosnia-Herzegovina accepted the international peace plan because the integrity of the country was guaranteed and because it got assurances that would be asked of it."



A Bosnian Muslim prays by her son's grave at Sarajevo. Her son, Nuhic Samir, was killed in the Kovaci military cemetery in the capital fighting in 1992 (AFP photo)

Rebels attack Chechen capital

GROZNY (AFP) — The Russian-backed opposition to Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev Saturday launched helicopter attacks on the capital of the Caucasian breakaway republic as its forces gathered on the city outskirts, according to an AFP correspondent.

Helicopters fired four rockets at the city centre, hitting the 16th floor of a building. Several people were reported hurt in firing.

Meanwhile, seven tanks loyal to Mr. Dudayev had surrounded the presidential palace.

Earlier in the day opposition Provisional Council had said in a statement its forces had carried out helicopter strikes against government

military posts in suburban Grozny Saturday morning.

The opposition forces, under the command of rebel helicopter pilot Umar Avturkhanov, said Mr. Dudayev's troops had been forced to retreat from the suburbs and were headed toward central Grozny.

Chechen rebel forces have been trying to overthrow Mr. Dudayev's government since the beginning of September.

ITAR-TASS had earlier reported that helicopter strikes had been launched in two areas, in Urus-Martan, south of Grozny, and in Tolstoy-Yurt in the north.

In an interview published by the Moscow newspaper Izvestia Saturday, Mr. Avturkhanov, who has been supported by Moscow since August, said that "the principal problem was not to enter Grozny — we can do that in a few hours — but to organise an operation that does not cause a large number of victims."

Chechnya, a small Muslim republic rich in petroleum, became independent from Moscow three years ago after Mr. Dudayev unilaterally proclaimed its independence.

The last confrontation between rebels and Chechen government forces was Thursday in the Urus-Martan region, the chief Beslan Gantemirov, where between four and 10 people were killed.

No U.S.-N. Korea nuke accord after top envoys resume talks

GENEVA (AFP) — U.S. and North Korean negotiators failed to reach an accord Saturday, the top U.S. envoy said, after two hours of talks billed as putting the final touches to an agreement eliminating Pyongyang's capacity to acquire nuclear weapons.

Neither of the two delegations made a statement when the talks resumed at noon (1100 GMT), but that fact that it involved the top envoys — U.S. Ambassador-at-Large Robert Gallucci and North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok-Ju — was seen as indicating some progress had been made.

But after the talks Mr. Gallucci told reporters an accord had still not been reached, although his team said the delegations' respective heads could meet again during the afternoon.

Earlier, expectations that

an agreement was imminent were raised after South Korean Vice Premier Lee Hong-Koo told parliament in Seoul Friday that the bilateral deal would probably be completed before the end of the weekend.

A senior State Department official had also late Friday confirmed in Washington an agreement was in sight.

"We believe that we are on the edge of a possibly major agreement," said Winston Lord, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Asian and Pacific affairs. But short afterwards a State Department spokeswoman, Christine Shelley tried to temper that optimism by saying Mr. Lord had merely reacted to Mr. Lee's comments.

Other department officials reported Mr. Gallucci was "astounded" to hear that Mr. Lord had predicted that an agreement was in sight after

nearly three weeks of talks.

In Geneva, U.S. officials told reporters Friday night that Mr. Gallucci and the north Korean vice-foreign minister, who had left their experts wrangling with complex issues for the last four days, would only meet once that work would be completed.

North Korean spokesman Pak Chang Rim said he believed the experts had made "some progress" during eight hours of talks Friday.

Both delegations had spent part of Saturday morning telephoning each other to decide when and at which level to meet.

Washington has demanded North Korea halt its current nuclear programme — suspected of harbouring an arms facility — and adopt an alternative programme using lower-level technology.

The first round was held in the northern Jajma peninsula where the LTTE runs a de facto state called Eelam and have kept security forces and the government writ at bay.

The euphoria, however, was not shared by rival Tamil politicians who say they are sceptical about the peace initiative and the willingness on both sides of the ethnic divide to make concessions.

Defence analysts believe that previous peace bids to end the LTTE guerrilla war, which has cost 30,000 lives since 1972, failed because the government had no fallback position.

War-weary Sri Lankans in the island's north say they are pinning their hopes for peace on their new prime minister.

"She is educated, she is sincere and she is trying her best to solve this problem," said Seliath Sripathmanadan, a shop-keeper in rebel-held Jaffna town.

German campaigners take a break before polls

BONN (R) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl and challenger Rudolf Scharping took a break from campaigning Saturday, the last day before German elections that opinion polls say could be a cliff-hanger.

The contenders earlier wrapped up their campaigns with impassioned appeals to voters in an attempt to clinch a handful of votes which could decide Sunday's outcome.

Mr. Kohl and opposition Social Democratic (SPD) leader Scharping followed the German tradition that has political parties keep a low profile on the day before balloting.

"Scharping is relaxing at home today," an SPD spokesman told reporters about the party leader, who lives in the town of Lahnstein on the Rhine River.

Only the Liberal Free Democrats (FDP), nervous about their chances of return-

ing as junior partners to Mr. Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU), took a final shot at campaigning with an advertisement in national newspapers.

The advertisement, placed by FDP supporters who said they were not party members, argued against fears among some would-be FDP voters that the small party would crash out of the parliament in Bonn, as it has in six local elections and a European vote in the past year.

"Your vote for the FDP is not wasted," the text read, noting that recent opinion polls put support for the liberals at between six and eight per cent, above the five per cent minimum required to enter German legislatures.

The latest opinion survey, from the Allenbach Institute, gave Mr. Kohl's coalition 48.5 per cent of the vote against 47.5 per cent for the combined opposition of the SPD, Greens and reformed

communist Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS).

Newspaper commentators said the close contest between Mr. Kohl's centre-right coalition and the leftist opposition was no surprise because the major parties, the CDU and SPD, were increasingly merging in the political centre.

"The choice becomes more of an ordeal because the two big mass parties are so similar in their goals and views and have to be that way. In large sections of society, they are courting the same voters," the Munich-based Sueddeutsche Zeitung said.

Although Mr. Kohl's CDU is projected by opinion polls to get the highest number of seats in the new parliament, the complexities of German coalition politics mean it is by no means clear what kind of government will emerge.

A slight increase in the opposition vote could mean the PDS — successors to East

Germany's hardline rulers — would in effect block a fourth term for Mr. Kohl's coalition.

Although the PDS has little or no chance of reaching the minimum five per cent needed to get into parliament, it would get some 30 deputies in courtesy of a loophole if it wins three constituencies outright, even by only a single vote.

If the Communists do block a CDU-FDP majority, the SPD has pledged not to try to form a government which relies on PDS support — leaving a grand CDU-SPD coalition led by Mr. Kohl as the most likely alternative.

Germany's 60 million eligible voters can cast their ballots from 0700 GMT Sunday. The first exit polls will be broadcast on television immediately after voting stops at 1700 GMT.

Usually reliable computer projections based on partial results will follow about half an hour later.

Kim to take formal charge soon in N. Korea — report

SEOUL (R) — Kim Jong-Il is expected to take over formally next week as North Korean Communist Party chief in succession to his father, President Kim Il-Sung, who died in July, news reports said Saturday.

The South Korean News Agency, Yonhap, quoting a diplomatic source in Seoul, said the party Central Committee would give its stamp of approval of a day or two after Mr. Kim, 52, attends a mass rally Sunday marking the end

of 100 days of mourning for the late "great leader."

Kim Il-Sung designated his pudgy, bespectacled son back in the 1970s as heir-apparent to the obsessively secretive Stalinist state.

Ever since the president's sudden death on July 8 at the age of 82, the strictly controlled Pyongyang press has treated Mr. Kim Jong-Il as the nation's leader.

Yet until now there has been no confirmation he had formally taken over his

father's mantle. He has not appeared in public since funeral rites for his father in Pyongyang on July 20, raising speculation he might be ill or facing internal rivals.

Yonhap's source said he was now due to reappear at Sunday's mass rally.

"We have gathered information that Kim Jong-Il will attend a rally on the 16th to mark his father's 100-day mourning," the source said.

Then North Korea will call a Communist Party Cen-

tral Committee meeting either on the 17th or 18th to elect Kim Jong-Il as party chief.

The source said his election to the state presidency, the other key leadership post, would come later.

"North Korea needs to hold a meeting of the Supreme People's Assembly (rubberstamp parliament) to elect a president, and it hasn't done that yet," the source said. "We think it will be done later on."

Mandela, Buthelezi launch anti-crime campaign

SOWETO, South Africa (Agencies) — Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi said Saturday he and political rival President Nelson Mandela had finally come together to build a new South Africa.

Mr. Buthelezi, whose relations with Mr. Mandela's ruling African National Congress (ANC) have been marked by distrust and suspicion, appealed to armed supporters of his Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and their ANC rivals to end the bloodletting and rampant crime in black-led South Africa.

The Zulu leader, sharing a platform with Mandela in Soweto township outside Johannesburg, said he and the president would together lead South Africa "on the path of its final liberation."

"On this historic day, President Nelson Mandela and I have finally come together as the political leaders of the new South Africa to join hands and share the responsibility," said Mr. Buthelezi, home affairs minister in Mr. Mandela's government.

He said the armed groups, blamed for past

political turf wars in which thousands were killed, "have to work together... against a common enemy of violence, crime and intimidation."

At least 58 people a day were murdered in South Africa in the first six months of the year.

Mr. Mandela, Mr. Buthelezi and Mineral Energy Affairs Minister Pik Botha arrived together at Soweto's Orlando Stadium where they were welcomed by about 2,000 people, mostly Inkatha supporters, many armed with traditional weapons including clubs and spears.

"Irrespective of our political differences... President Mandela and I stand together... because we are the leaders of this nation and we have the duty to lead our people into the new struggle for liberation," said Mr. Buthelezi, whose party came third in April's all-race elections behind the ANC and F.W. de Klerk's National Party.

"We must make a commitment in our hearts to never again oppress and intimidate our own brothers and sisters merely because they belong to a different

organisation or because they are a minority," said Mr. Buthelezi.

At least 15,000 people were killed in fighting between supporters of the ANC and Inkatha but the turf wars have only subsided since the elections.

In Ventersdorp, 120 kilometres west of Johannesburg, the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB) Saturday honoured eight of its members killed in defence of right-wing causes.

"The AWB were the only ones that delivered the heroes," AWB leader Eugene Terre Blanche told about 500 supporters, many of them armed and in uniform.

There were no incidents during the ceremony and the march, led by Mr. Terre Blanche astride a white horse.

The eight honours were five men killed, three failed interveners and three black homophobes.

Bophuthatswana and three shanty towns in Bophuthatswana and three shanty towns in Bophuthatswana.

has been reincorporated into South Africa.

Meanwhile, a vigilante court may have executed seven men whose bodies riddled with bullets were found in a shack settlement near Durban Friday, police said.

Police said the victims were shot with assault rifles and other weapons, and more than 100 empty cartridges were found near the bodies in Bhambani, a black settlement. Maj. Gen. Johan Meintjies said the fact that some of the victims were found bound with wire pointed to the work of vigilantes.

"Indications are that it could have been a kangaroo court, but what the motive is at this stage is difficult to say," Gen. Meintjies said.

Under apartheid, blacks who rejected the police and courts of the white-minority government took the law into their own hands with "self-defence units" and "people's courts." Innocent victims have been swept up in vigilante violence, and the new black-led government is struggling to convince South Africans to trust the legal system.

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Gulf between East, West

RUSSIA'S DIPLOMATIC initiative to defuse the recent Gulf crisis is important on two counts. First, the trip by the foreign minister of Russia, Andre Kozyrev, to Baghdad in the wake of the escalation of tension in the area marks what could be a fresh beginning for Russian diplomacy in the Middle East after a long hiatus brought about by the demise of the communist order in the former Soviet Union. Second, because the Kozyrev mission succeeded in winning a major Iraqi concession in the form of according recognition to Kuwait in return for a clear commitment from the international community to lifting the sanctions still imposed on Iraq.

But the repercussions of the Russian-brokered deal in Baghdad has already caused confusion among the Western allies who were caught off guard by the sudden Russian "breakthrough" in Baghdad. The once solid Western alliance now appears to be cracking under the weight of Russian and French opposition to overreaction to the recent massing of Iraqi soldiers near the Kuwaiti border. The split between the allied countries on how to deal with Iraq in the wake of recent events took a negative turn when the French defence minister, Francois Leotard, alluded to domestic U.S. considerations as the basis for Washington's decision to overreact to the Iraqi military move.

That the permanent members of the Security Council no longer see eye to eye on Iraq is a foregone conclusion. The division of opinion between London and Washington on the one hand and Paris, Moscow and Beijing on the other has been in the making for sometime now with both Russia and France poised to strike lucrative business deals with Iraq once it is rehabilitated and the embargo on its oil exports is lifted. As recognition of Kuwait by Iraq constitutes a major step towards securing stability in the Gulf, we strongly believe that Iraq's offer must be taken up seriously and expeditiously. This Iraqi offer presents the most viable opportunity for a permanent resolution of the tension between the two Arab countries. It is an opportunity that should not be missed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily Saturday severely criticised the Nobel Prize committee for granting the Israeli Premier and Foreign Minister two thirds of the 1994 peace prize, saying that the two Israeli leaders are at the head of a state bent on aggression. These two men are still biding time on the traditional Zionist policy expansion and racial discrimination and the continue to ignore bids for releasing thousands of Arab detainees from Israeli jails, and the removal of the West Bank barrier. The writer said that the Nobel prize was given at a time when the Israelis are still occupying lands belonging to four Arab states, and despite their total disregard to calls for giving back the Palestinian people their legitimate rights in their own homeland. The prize ought to have waited to see the implementation of the Oslo deal, which constituted the basis for the prize because the Israelis are not implementing that deal, said the writer.

AL DUSTOUR daily discussed Iraq's acceptance of a Russian peace plan primarily providing for Baghdad's recognition of Kuwait's borders and the emirate's sovereignty, describing the move as a step in the right direction. The Russians have now achieved a very positive development which calls for deep satisfaction as it could mark the end of the new Gulf crisis and serve as a harbinger for ending the U.N. sanctions on Iraq, said the paper. Saying that Iraq has now for the first time recognised the U.N. Charter as a democratic country, the paper said Iraq deserves to be recognised as a sovereign state. The paper also has no ground for perpetuating the sanctions and should pave the ground for Kuwait to reciprocate the Iraqi move by extending a helping hand to the Iraqi people, said the daily. It called on Kuwait's rulers to seize this opportunity and contribute towards a lasting stability and security in the Gulf region.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Much to lose in Casablanca conference

THE INTERNATIONAL economic development conference scheduled to take place in Casablanca, Morocco, is drawing a lot of publicity and expectations. The conference is being projected as an historic turning point in the economic development and prosperity of the Middle East, something similar to the Marshall Plan, which helped Western Europe to recover and prosper after the end of War II. It is also being presented as the platform to announce the birth of the so-called Middle East market, a code name for merging Israel with the Middle East or, if you will, annexing the Middle East to Israel.

It is of course too risky to prejudice the conference or speculate about its outcome. Fifty states and 800 multinational corporations were invited to attend it, over and above the relevant international institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is obviously an unprecedented large-scale international demonstration since Britain woods, which no country in the Middle East can afford to ignore.

This writer is a supporter of the current peace process. Therefore, the reservations expressed here do not stem from political or ideological considerations. They are the result of an objective reading and an attempt to evaluate the expected outcome from a Jordanian national interest viewpoint.

In the first place, the conference is expected to emphasise the role of the private sector and private companies, not in the Middle East countries only but in the donors side as well in the economic development process. This may mean that the donor states are trying to avoid making commitments of direct state to state aid. Private companies are after profits. They calculate the profitability of any project with utmost accuracy. They don't respond to well

written speeches which will be delivered in the conference by political stars who don't even claim to be objective or impartial. Corporations don't respond to the so-called encouragement of their governments. Conference or no conference, if investments in the Middle East became feasible, the multi-national corporation will invest. What counts are the rate of expected return and the degree of risk involved. The last thing that the bosses of such corporations worry about is to support and reinforce peace in the Middle East. Those bosses will use the conference to meet each in Casablanca and make deals among themselves. They will not go to Casablanca to make decisions to invest or finance projects in Jordan, Syria, or Palestine in order for peace to develop strong roots.

On the other hand, the establishment of the Middle East Bank for Development may be a sure indication that Jordan will not receive the hoped for grants and assistance to finance development. The bank will definitely be run on commercial basis. It will not deal in grants or, for that matter, reduced interest rates. The bank's shareholders may even expect high dividends at the expense of the borrowers.

If development in Jordan is to be funded through the Development Bank of the Middle East, the end result will be development by debt. The result is tested and well known: An artificial and temporary prosperity when we start spending the money on projects, followed by a crisis and retreat when the instalments start to fall due.

Finally, Israel must declare its firm readiness to withdraw from the Arab occupied territories in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Golan Heights and southern Lebanon before its leaders may be allowed to shine in the Middle East conference side by side with Arab leaders.

Berber question returns to haunt troubled Algeria

By Francis Ghilès

THE RECENT kidnapping in Algeria of the Berber singer Lou Nouou Matouh has again raised the issue that has haunted modern Algeria — the Berber question, or, to be more precise, the Kabyle question.

Mr. Matouh is a militant of the Berber Cultural Movement (MCB) which calls for Berber to be treated as a "national" language in Algeria, on a par with Arabic, and for it to be taught in all schools.

As provocative as he is popular, Mr. Matouh recently claimed he was "neither an Arab nor a Muslim" and argued that the Kabyle Berber heartland, a mountainous region 150-km east of Algiers, should be granted autonomous political status.

His latest record, Kenza, is dedicated to the daughter of Tahar Djaout, a Kabyle writer and politician who was murdered by supporters of radical Islam in June last year. Mr. Matouh is suspected of being held by a similar group. The singer's publicly expressed love of whisky has turned him into what Tahar Djaout was until his death, the man religious zealots love to hate.

Recently more than 100,000 people took part in a peaceful demonstration in the Berber capital of Tizi Ouzou marked by calls and threats for the safe return of Mr. Matouh.

The original inhabitants of North Africa were Berber but the process of Arabisation, the adoption of Arabic

language and culture, has, over 13 centuries, left only a third of the Maghreb's 60m people with Berber as their mother tongue. Between 20 and 25 per cent of Algeria's 26m people speak Berber, two-thirds of them coming from Kabylia.

The Kabyles played a key role in Algeria's modern history, one quite out of proportion to their numbers.

Between the two world wars, emigrants from Kabylia formed the vast majority of Muslim Algerian labourers in France where they founded the first Algerian nationalist movement, L'Etoile Nord Africaine.

As trade unionists, and with the help of French Communist Party members, they became acquainted with modern ideologies and methods of resistance. The Etoile and its post-war successor, the Party Populaire Algerien, provided the fount of modern Algerian politics. The idea of independence for what had been for a century three French departments came from their ranks.

During the eight bloody years of the war of independence which started in 1954, the two Berber mountainous heartlands Kabylia and the Aurès mountains to the south, witnessed some of the worst fighting between French troops and the armed supporters of the Front de Liberation National (FLN).

The leading ideologue of the FLN, Abano Ramdono, a Kabyle, was murdered by some of his peers in Morocco in 1959 — an act which symbolised the events which were

to take place at independence in 1962 when those FLN leaders who had spent most of the war years in Morocco and Tunisia usurped power from those who had fought in the bush. This "betrayal", as it is now seen by many, opened a wound which has yet to be healed.

Despite the fact that Krim Belkacem, who led the talks at which France agreed to Algerian independence, was a Kabyle, the new rulers of Algeria, President Ahmad Ben Bella and — after he was ousted by a military coup in 1983 — Colonel Houari Boumedienne, clamped down on the freedoms their countrymen had paid such a heavy price to win. All expression of Berber culture were forbidden and fast Arabisation imposed.

The MCB was born after riots in Tizi Ouzou in 1980 forced the new president, Colonel Chadli Bendjedid, to grant a greater measure of freedom. Singers such as Mr. Matouh, who had adapted old Kabyle songs to a more modern musical form, had already become popular. Music became a key vehicle for the expression of a culture and language whose alphabet is the old Phoenician script but has not been commonly written for centuries.

Like most of their countrymen, the Kabyles are not of one mind. The lines that fracture Algerian society run through every social group and region. After riots in 1988 broke the power of the FLN, two parties boasting a distinct "Kabyle" identity

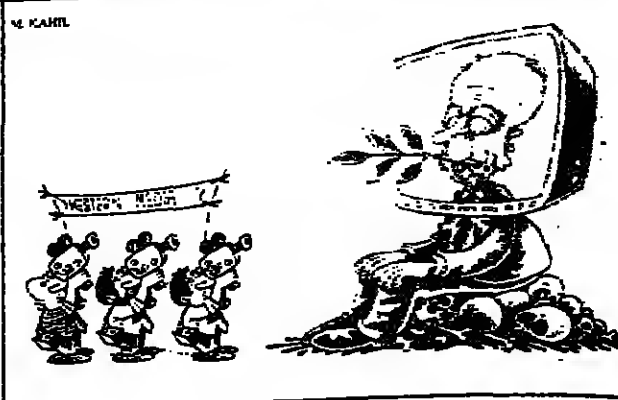
emerged. The Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Democratie (RCD) traced its roots to the MCB while the Front des Forces Socialistes (FFS) rose from the clandestinity forced on it since its foundation in 1963.

In the first round of the elections in December 1991, the FFS did much better than the RCD. The two leaders reacted very differently to the annulment of the election in January 1992 and the de facto military coup that accompanied it. Despite being deeply opposed to the ideology of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which looked set to win the election, the FFS leader Hocine Ait Ahmed opposed the suspension and argued that democracy could only be won on the ground.

The RCD leader, Said Sadi, whose links with certain military commanders was an open secret, backed the coup. On learning of the 47.3 per cent share of the vote the FIS had picked up in the first round, against the RCD's meagre 2.9 per cent, he confessed to not understanding the country he lived in. For a while he was a firm advocate of "eradicating" fundamentalism.

Be they "Arab" or "Berber", most Algerians feel insulted by Kabyle Berbers claiming they are "not Muslim". They are also fearful that such statements are conducive to confrontation rather than dialogue, "a form of politics desperately lacking in Algeria."

The Financial Times.



The irony of Nobel prize

By Michael Jansen

IT IS deeply ironic that a fuss should be made about the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat rather than about the Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin because Mr. Rabin has, throughout his long career in the military, always been a man of uncompromising violence while Mr. Arafat has, since the early seventies, spoken of making peace with Israel.

Born in Jerusalem in 1922, Mr. Rabin was recruited into the elite pre-state Zionist force, the Palmach, which commanded the Harel brigade. During the siege of Jerusalem in the spring and early summer of 1948, he tried and failed to lift the Arab siege of the old city of Jerusalem. Strymied, the Israelis used the tactics of flooding the Arab armies — the Jordanian Arab Legion — with thousands of Palestinian refugees in order to distract them from the siege and loosen their grip on the city and on other strongpoints near Tel Aviv. Thus, on July 12-13, 1948 in response to an order issued on May 11 (before the creation of the Jewish state on the 15th) by Prime Minister David Ben Gurion; Mr. Rabin conducted the expulsion of all the inhabitants of the Arab towns of Lydda and Ramleh "quickly without attention to age."

This order was issued after the fighting in the towns had come to an end and at least 250 civilians had been killed, 80 in the Dahamash mosque. Some 50,000-70,000 people were expelled from the towns, the population fleeing Lydda on foot and in buses and trucks supplied by the Israelis from Ramleh. And once the population had gone, the elite Palmach troops, under Mr. Rabin's command, and Israeli civilians from the nearby kibbutzim, looted and pillaged the two towns.

Mr. Rabin later criticised the cruelty of the operation, placing responsibility on Ben Gurion, but he obeyed orders. His obedience contrasted sharply with the refusal of a second Israeli officer, a Canadian-Jew

named Ben Dunkleman, who had been ordered to evacuate the Palestinian population of Nazareth. Although Mr. Dunkleman was quickly transferred from Nazareth, his defiance of the evacuation order forced the Israeli general staff to think again and the inhabitants of Nazareth were not forced to take to the roads as did those of Lydda and Ramleh.

During the first period as prime minister after the 1973 war, Mr. Rabin permitted the Gush Emunim settlers to establish their first colony near Nablus. Their declared objective being to squat illegally on Palestinian land and in Palestinian houses.

Then as defence minister in 1985, he supervised the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, keeping the "security zone" which has led to constant strife in the south of that country and in 1987, at the outbreak of the intifada, Mr. Rabin urged his soldiers to break the bones of Palestinian demonstrators.

Once again prime minister in 1992, Mr. Rabin ordered the deportation of the 415 alleged Hamas militants to a snowy hillside in Lebanon. There they remained for more than a year, from snow to sweltering summer to snow.

Since the signing of the Oslo accord on Sept. 13 last year, Mr. Rabin has done his best to stall the implementation of the deal and to change the terms of the agreement he signed while focusing Israeli efforts on strengthening and expanding Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza in order to ensure Israel's dominance in these areas of Palestinian autonomy.

By contrast, Yasser Arafat has done his level best, to the extent of destroying the credibility of the Oslo accord and undermining his position, to conciliate the Israelis while achieving minimal implementation of the provisions of the accord. If one were to choose between the two men for the award it should be Mr. Arafat, accused of being a "terrorist" by Klare Kristiansen, a member of the Nobel committee who has resigned.

Arms and the middle men

Anthony Sampson

WAS the British arms deal with the Saudis in 1984-85 "properly negotiated", as Lady Thatcher insisted on Monday? Certainly it was in the tradition of proper negotiation in Saudi Arabia, where commissions have been an essential part of the process. Every big deal is seen as an opportunity to enrich members of the royal family and to spread favours to friends in the courts; and the total price of any project is increased to allow for commissions.

Adnan Khashoggi, the most famous Saudi arms dealer, has insisted that commissions are really part of a welfare system which distributes the wealth from the top; and most Saudis would accept the system as perfectly proper, provided it is not taken to extremes. It might be compared to pre-industrial, 18th-century Europe, where the best hope for a commoner to build up a fortune was to become an agent for the monarch or the army, and cream off a commission — like Marlborough's paymaster, the Duke of Chandos, who built a palace at Edgware on the proceeds.

The traditional Saudi system escalated in the 1960s and 1970s, when huge arms

and oil deals enabled many princes to become very rich, while junior players insisted on having their cut. Western companies had to accept this, and their governments tacitly condoned it, although by the late 1970s the Callaghan government was worried about commissions running out of control.

For the Saudis there was always the danger implicit in such arrangements that the commissions determined the orders. Much of the weaponry in the vast arsenal built up in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait was scarcely relevant to their defence needs — as was embarrassingly evident in the Gulf war, when they had to rely on Western armies.

The Al Yamamah arms deals in 1985 and 1987 raised the stakes much higher. The sheer size of the first deal, worth around \$20 billion, was unprecedented; the claimants were becoming greedier, since Saudi revenues were diminishing as the oil price fell; and the commissions were running out of control.

There were several Saudi rivals for the spoils. A key figure was Prince Bandar, the ambassador to Washington and son of the



Wafiq Said (left) with his wife (third left), son and the Thatcher family

minister of defence. Prince Sultan, who was present at the signing at Salzburg in July 1985. There was also Prince Sultan's close friend and agent in London, Wafiq Said, who was a friend of the Thatchers and Jonathan Aitken.

There was also a more shadowy duo, the Ibrahim brothers, whose sister is King Fahd's favourite wife and mother to his adored son Prince Abdul Aziz. The Ibrahims, who lived in London and ran their own business from Bowater House, had become major players in several big deals. No one knew how much money they kept, and how much went to their nephew, the young prince. But their record commissions, collected with ruthless insistence, sent a wave of resentment through other Saudis — including minor princes who had missed out. The scale of payoffs was beginning to divide the royal family.

The British government explained that the Al Yamamah deals were thoroughly proper. Mrs. Thatcher had personally told King Fahd that there should be no commissions. In the second deal, the government formally wrote to British Aerospace to say that there should be no commissions. The Ibrahim brothers were shown the letter.

But the Saudis, of course, could allocate their commissions as they wished; and the payments were all the easier to conceal because they were made partly in the form of oil. The fact that the oil was delivered outside the Saudis' official OPEC quota — so adding to the prevailing glut — added to the disquiet about the deal.

With the huge sums at stake, it would be surprising if some money did not find its way to the British side. It was part of normal Arab

etiquette to reward people who had been helpful in easing the deal, and with billions at stake, a few millions were like pocket money. To reward the son of the British prime minister — even if he gave no help — would be as usual as rewarding the King's son.

Arms deals, with their unique justification for secrecy, have always had rules of their own, and previous revelations from Washington have shown how easy it was to pay distinguished Westerners — including Prince Bernhard of The Netherlands to act as go-betweens.

The British Ministry of Defence, we now know, was itself not immune from serious corruption; for only in May a procurement officer, Gordon Foxley, was convicted and jailed for having received bribes worth more than £2 million to provide arms orders for European companies. That

disturbing story should have produced a major investigation into the ministry's safeguards.

In negotiating with Saudis, with their quite different attitude to payments, it is hard to ensure that deals are clean on the Western side even if corrupt on the other. The vast commissions of the 1980s were always likely to overflow into the West. So what does it mean to be "properly negotiated"? To the Saudis it means taking due note of the claims of the royal family, and traditional generosity towards friends. But to Westerners, that will means two-way corruption — unless the whole negotiation is subjected to far more rigorous scrutiny than we have yet seen evidence of.

Anthony Sampson is the author of *The Arms Bazaar* (Coronet). The article is reprinted from *The Times*.

Long way to go in reforming educational system

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Some progress has been made in addressing profound weaknesses in Jordan's public school system since the 1989 launch of the 10-year Educational Reform Programme (ERP), but numerous woes still remain to be tackled, according to some experts.

"We are moving in the right direction with the passage of time," said one university professor of education who declined to be named. But, she admitted, "things are not always moving smoothly."

Media claims of a crisis state in many facets of the public system, which educates 79 per cent of Jordan's primary and secondary students, have echoed for some time. Numerous critics have decried, among other things, shoddy school facilities, incompetent and poorly-paid teachers, and failing morale among both teachers and students alike.

The criticism has come in spite of the fact that Jordan's public school system is, according to one expert, one of the better ones in the Third World in terms of guaranteeing a basic education to the vast majority of its younger citizens.

"Experts internationally believe public education in Jordan is well ahead of the majority of other Third World countries in overall terms," said Victor Billeh of the government's National Centre for Educational Research and Development (NCERD).

The Kingdom's entire school system underwent a mammoth quantitative expansion between 1970 and 1990. Existing schools more than doubled, from 1,508 to 3,254. Teachers more than quadrupled, from 11,700 to 43,780, and Jordan's pre-college student population exploded from 380,000 to 1.05 million.

Over two thirds of all Jordanians could neither read or write in 1961, but by 1993 that ratio was down to 15 per cent.

Jordan's public school sector was where the greater portion of the overall expansion took place, and thus it can boast impressive progress on "the quantitative level," Dr. Billeh said. "However, there was the general perception that quality had not kept pace with that expansion, and has actually dropped in some areas."

This perception was a major factor behind the drawing up of the ERP, he said. It was envisaged as a comprehensive overhaul of public schools along seven major tracks, including reforming textbooks and curriculum, upgrading teacher's qualifications, and improving educational facilities.

The plan further called for the participation of all Jordanian agencies which deal with education, including ministries, university faculties of education, and the Vocational Training Corporation.

Outside donors for the start-up and foundation phase of the programme, which cost \$250 million according to Dr. Billeh, included the World Bank, Japan, USAID, and Britain. A second phase of the ERP should begin in June 1995 and is expected to cost around \$180 million, he said.

The organisation, which Dr. Billeh heads, was set up in 1990 as an official watchdog to monitor and evaluate the progress of the reforms. Subsequently, initial studies of public schools, which were done as a prelude to full implementation of the ERP, showed fault-lines in several major areas, according to Dr. Billeh.

Textbooks were antiquated, with no changes or updating since the 1970s. Only 30 per cent of the teachers held a four-year college degree, and the majority of the others were poorly trained.

The rapid setting up of new public schools during the earlier expansions left behind many facilities of marginal quality, and many buildings could not adequately hold the large numbers of students enrolled in them. Such problems were especially marked at roughly a quarter of the school-buildings, which were rented by the government from other owners after construction and use with other purposes in mind, Dr. Billeh said.

Five years into the ERP, some substantial tangible changes have already been accomplished, according to both Dr. Billeh and the education professor.

Perhaps the most substantial step is in the complete overhaul and rewriting of all textbooks now used in grades 1-10, with grades 11 and 12 to follow in the next two years.

"The new books are much better than the old books in every way," said the education professor.

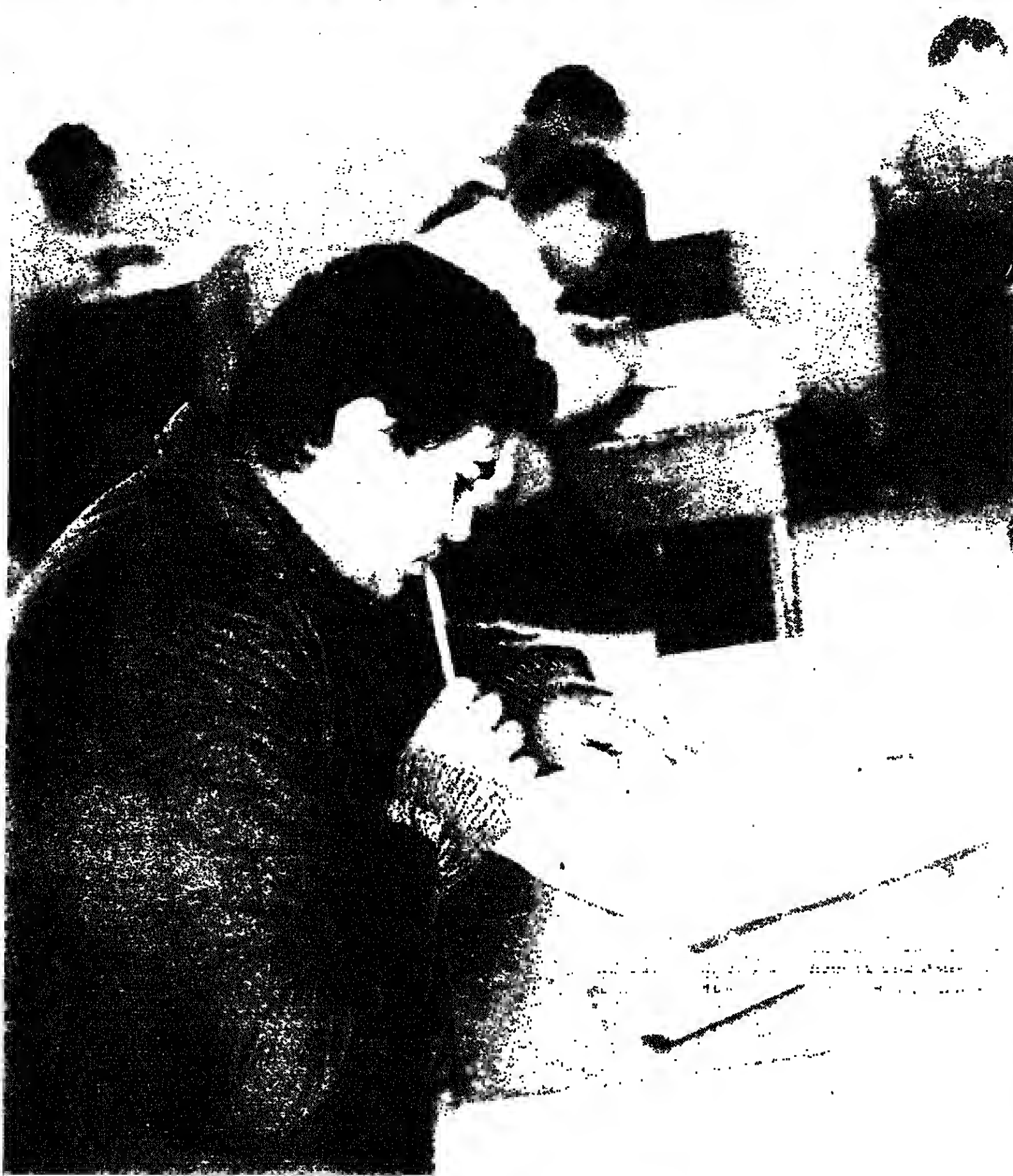
"Style, graphics, and quality of content, and especially the way they approach the students and encourage them to think in a critical manner."

Also being phased out is the old two-year community college teaching certificate, which most public school educators were receiving as their passport to employment. Many experts had considered this certificate to be grossly inadequate. The college professor, for one, commented that "all too many" of the teachers she had seen who were holding the certificate "are extremely weak."

Now, however, new employees must possess a bachelor's degree, and those already working with the certificate must upgrade themselves to bachelor's degrees through additional training.

A Practical Education Programme (PEP) initiated at Jordan University has retooled the university's bachelor's degree in education to put more emphasis on practical and technical classroom skills.

"The government is also



THE BIG TEST: Jordanian students sit for the tawjihi examination (file photo)

spending a very large amount of effort and money on upgrading vocational training programmes," said the college professor.

"With today's job conditions, people now realise that having a trained job without a college degree is better than having the degree and finding no work."

Public sector vocational training was now "extremely strong," she said.

However, she felt the ERP had ignored the most crucial problem in public schools, what she maintained was a state of disaster in educating students in the first three primary grades due to vastly over-

crowded classes.

"We have many classes where 50, 60 or more students in this age category are sitting in one classroom," she said. "How can you do this at such a critical age?"

The alarming results, she maintained, were that "out of 50 children, only two, perhaps can read," in these grades.

She held that the early-age development of such grade learning deficiencies was the main factor behind high failure and dropout rates in the 4th through 10th grades.

A 1989 survey by the NCERD showed failures

and dropouts ranging between 10 to 20 per cent of students in those grades.

"The reforms must begin to focus on this critical area," she said. "Developing reading skills at the very young ages is the key to the whole learning process."

Both she and another education professor felt that the reforms had also lagged behind in another critical area by not changing the tawjihi exam system. The cumulative average of students who sat for the 1993-94 tawjihi exams was 48.8 per cent, while the prescribed pass/fail margin for the exam is 50 per cent.

The second professor, who also preferred anonymity, dismissed the credibility of the exams altogether, saying that "most of the material used in the tawjihi is completely invalid."

Dr. Billeh said substantial changes in the form and content of the tawjihi would be completed within the coming two years. Emphasis would be shifted towards measuring basic aptitudes and critical thinking and away from "memorisation."

Recommendations had also been made to drop the requirement that all students must succeed in the tawjihi to graduate from secondary schools, he said.

Only those wishing to attend college would need to take the exam, and others would be granted a certificate as proof of graduation. The exemption from the tawjihi would also include those wishing to work in the civil service, he added.

However, said the woman professor, a major fault in the tawjihi system remained in the fact that during 12 years of primary and secondary education, no assessments are made of students' aptitudes and progress except the tawjihi.

"It should not be a one-shot, win or lose deal," she said. "Universities must de-

velop other assessment tools besides the tawjihi, and the public schools must develop ways to measure students' achievements throughout their 12-year education, not just through one exam given in the final grade."

Her colleague said he was "sceptical that any major changes will be made in the tawjihi."

"It's been an established and institutionalised system for many years," he commented.

Of the problems cited by Dr. Billeh and the two professors, perhaps the most difficult situation to grapple with is the relatively low social regard held for public school teachers.

"Most of the people who train to be teachers are students with low tawjihi scores, who thus could not pursue a college degree in another field and feel forced into what they are doing," said Dr. Billeh.

"About 80 per cent of the students at our teaching college are like this," said the male professor. "They are enquiring to see how they can transfer to another faculty almost as soon as they come to us." The overall result of this and other factors, he said, is that "teaching is not recognised as a valid and worthwhile profession."

"And since teachers are only human beings," he added, "you cannot expect them to be faithfully committed when they compare themselves to any falafel shop worker and find no difference in terms of social esteem."

He also felt that the ERP suffered serious organisational weaknesses due to a general lack of communication between the many institutions involved in the plan. "Directors and professors in the educational field here do not keep in touch with each other," he said. "There is very little coordination at the practical levels — no exchange visits, information networks or conferences."

"As a result, we have no idea what other universities are doing in the field, what the Ministry of Education is doing, what NCERD is doing, or what is actually happening in the schools. Such a comprehensive national plan needs close contacts and communication. And until now, from what I have seen, there have been none."

The female professor was more optimistic about future prospects for the ERP. "I think that hope is really there, and in the next five years to one decade, we should see real fruits," she said.

Both she and Dr. Billeh remarked that under the constraints involved, especially budgetary ones, a great deal of patience was needed.

"This is the first attempt at such extensive reform in the system, and overhauling any education system nationwide is a complicated process," said Dr. Billeh. "We cannot expect things to change in the wink of an eye."

Returning Haitian president: Saviour or scoundrel?

By George Gedda
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — To his supporters, Jean-Bertrand Aristide is a man driven by the dream of a more just society, a fighter who cares only for his people, the first leader in his nation's history with an authentic popular following.

To his opponents, he is a mentally unstable demagogue with a penchant for mob rule, anti-American preachings and an almost cavalier disregard for constitutional norms.

These are the conflicting portraits of Haiti's enigmatic president, as he returns home after three years of exile in Washington.

Almost since the day he took office, U.S. President Bill Clinton has been dogged by the question of just how far he should go in support of this son of Haiti's south coast, about whom there are so many doubts, both personal and political. At enormous political risk, Mr. Clinton decided to send 20,000 troops to Haiti to secure his rein-

statement.

Mr. Aristide, 41, does not seem to have identified with his surroundings here, and perhaps it was too much to expect that a product of the hemisphere's poorest and most misruled country could assimilate easily into the local political culture.

He reflects the wariness of a man who has tried to do something no Haitian has ever done: tame the violent minority that has ruthlessly oppressed the Haitian majority for decades. He is the first even to have come close.

Despite these credentials, Mr. Aristide has been a source of unending frustration for official Washington almost since his arrival here in the fall of 1991, not long after he was deposed in a military coup.

Among other irritants to U.S. officials, he has said the United States was behind the coup that ousted him. He has never been firmly convinced that the administration wanted him back in power. Officials sometimes characterise him as "paranoid." Indeed, a

CIA profile that came to light last year also raised questions about his mental state.

As officials see it, Mr. Aristide had a totally unrealistic view of Washington's ability to force the military leaders in Port-au-Prince from office. His assumption that it could be done with a mere phone call to military headquarters was ridiculed by U.S. officials. He is seen here as long on charisma but short on political skills.

Critics have relentlessly called attention to his reliance on rule by the mob to get his way, as in his advocacy of "necklacing" — placing a gas-soaked tire on the shoulders of an enemy and setting it aflame.

His opponents also have pointed to his record of anti-Americanism. Americans, he said in 1990, "want to hold our guts all ways in their hands. Thus, we will be economically, politically and culturally dependent. For our part, we reject this."

The many disagreements he has had with U.S. officials over the past three years tend to obscure the reverence with which he seems to be held by most of his countrymen. He has been the object of displays of adulation rarely seen anywhere.

His backers see him as a true intellect, citing his Ph.D. in theology and his ability to converse in eight languages besides religious songs and plays five musical instruments.

In Haiti, he is perceived by some to have divine qualities, partly based on his frequent escapes from hushes with death. He first gained notice from his countrymen when as a 29-year-old firebrand priest in 1982, he called on his parishioners to rise up against the Duvalier dictatorship. A fearful government convinced the church hierarchy to send him abroad.

In 1988, three years after his return, the church was alarmed again by Mr. Aristide's crusade against the establishment and again ordered him into exile. This time tens of thousands of supporters mobbed the

streets, blocking his exit. He remained in Haiti but the church soon thereafter defrocked him, citing his encouragement of violence and exaltation of class struggle.

Thus his links to the Salesian order of Roman Catholicism, which dated back to his enrollment in a Salesian school at age 6, were broken. Coupled with his mother, a devout believer in education, the church was easily the most influential component of his formative years.

There were other influences as well later on. His studies in Israel, Canada and Greece made him aware of how underdeveloped Haiti was both politically and economically. Despite his large popular following, Mr. Aristide was wary about seeking the presidency in 1990, entering the race just eight weeks before the December elections. He won in a landslide, capturing two of every three votes. In February he was sworn in as president, his first elective post. He lasted seven months. His enemies in the military

and their allies in the small, wealthy elite deposed him.

During his brief tenure, many hopeful Haitians living abroad returned home and the number of those trying to flee by boat was relatively small. International aid to Mr. Aristide's government was generous.

But rights abuses did occur. The U.S. State Department's human rights report for 1991 said the Aristide government "proved unwilling or unable to restrain popular justice through mob violence."

An example was the use of such violence to prevent the Haitian parliament from censuring Mr. Aristide's prime minister on corruption charges in July 1991. But the rights situation in those days compares favourably with what has happened since September 1991 under the coup regime.

Now, with constitutional rule about to be restored, U.S. officials can only hope that, following their risky gamble on Mr. Aristide's behalf, he can help guide Haiti towards a better day.



TRIUMPHANT RETURN?: President Jean-Bertrand Aristide

U.S. inflation under control as growth continues apace

WASHINGTON (AFP) — There was good news on the U.S. economic front Friday, with new figures showing that inflation was under control even as growth continues — reducing chances that the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates.

Figures released Friday showed that consumer prices rose 0.2 per cent in September, after news Thursday of a drop of 0.5 per cent in wholesale prices for the same month.

The combination pleased the bond market, the most sensitive inflation barometer.

Interest rates on the Treasury Department's benchmark 30-year bonds fell from 7.85 per cent late Thursday to 7.81 per cent Friday shortly after the consumer price figures were released. It later rose slightly to 7.83 per cent.

The Federal Reserve also said Friday that industrial production was unchanged in September while factory capacity utilisation fell 0.2 per cent. The pause in industrial production was the first following 15 months of steady

increases.

In another sign of restrained growth, the government also announced Friday that retail sales for September had risen by 0.6 per cent after a 1.1 per cent rise in August.

Together, these figures are about as good as it gets, said Robert Dederick of Northern Trust Co.

"This is the best of all possible worlds," he said. "We are getting continued growth, but not so fast that inflationary pressures are mounting in any meaningful way."

Economist Cynthia Latta of DRI/McGraw Hill said that the Federal Reserve would not necessarily act now to raise short-term interest rates for the sixth time this year to forestall inflation.

"These are not numbers that suggest that they need to do anything immediately," she said.

Several economists said they were beginning to back away from earlier beliefs that the Federal Reserve (Fed) would decide to raise key rates at the Nov. 15 meeting

of its policy-making Open Market Committee.

Economist Robert Brusca of the brokerage firm Nikko Securities agreed. "The Fed really doesn't have any grounds to raise interest rates here," he said.

Mr. Brusca argued that the price rises excluding volatile energy and food prices were actually lower in September than they had been one year earlier. At an annualised rate, retail prices rose just 2.8 per cent since the beginning of the year — just slightly above the 2.7 per cent recorded in 1993.

But most experts continued to predict that the Fed would act to raise rates after the Nov. 15 meeting.

Other economic figures — like the 4.1 per cent rise in gross domestic product for the second quarter — show that the economy may in fact be growing too quickly to avoid inflationary pressures.

Despite five Fed moves to tighten the money supply since February, the U.S. economy could still grow by 3.5 per cent in the third quarter,

fast enough to risk overheating, said economist Russ Sheldon of Mellon Bank.

Several other analysts agreed, saying that the Federal Reserve would likely try to slow economic growth to 2.5 per cent to avert increases in inflation.

The most recent tightening of monetary policy came in mid-August, when the Federal Reserve raised the discount rate and the Fed funds rate by one-half of one per cent each bringing them to four per cent and 4.75 per cent, respectively.

The discount rate is the rate that the Federal Reserve charges banks for overnight loans while the Fed funds rate is what banks charge each other for overnight loans.

The most recent inflation figures should be good news for Democrats: The Fed would likely not raise the rates before the Nov. 8 legislative vote — one of the few in which the party in power risks losing massive number of seats despite a true economic upturn.

Easing ban on Israel to benefit Arab Gulf countries, official says

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The decision by Gulf Arab states to ease a long-standing economic boycott against Israel will help them acquire Western technology and boost their private sector, an official said Saturday.

Several previously black-listed companies from the United States and other countries are expected to rush to the region and trade will sharply grow between the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and industrial countries, said Hassan Al Numan, chairman of the federal oil of the Dammam-based GCC chambers of commerce and industry.

"The decision to lift the indirect boycott will contribute to increasing joint investment between Gulf states and those companies while foreign firms will seek new agents in the region," he told Al Khaleej newspaper.

"Trade between the GCC and the United States and Europe will also increase considerably and this will boost the private sector in these countries."

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — agreed to lift an indirect boycott against Israel following talks between their foreign ministers and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the United Nations on Sept. 30.

But they have maintained the direct ban would remain in force until it is removed by a collective decision by the Cairo-based Arab League.

The League has given its members the freedom to lift separately the secondary boycott, which prohibits dealing with companies linked to Israel and bars Israeli publications or ships calling at Israeli ports.

Critics of Arab League figures, Mr. Numan said the boycott had cost Israel around \$40 billion between 1950 and 1992.

He said the loss was because the embargo had deprived Israel of around \$37 billion dollars in investment which could have boosted economic annual growth by three per cent during that

period.

Mr. Numan, also head of the UAE's Sharjah chamber, said Israel's months of 1993 from \$25 billion two years ago.

Its trade balance also suffered from a deficit of 6.3 billion in 1992 and \$7 billion in 1993.

"I think this is the reason why Israel is interested in the economic of the Middle East peace process," Mr. Numan said.

He urged chambers and other economic institutions in the Arab World to prepare studies on their activities and future economic relations with Israel when Arab States totally end sanctions against Israel.

Japan approves tax reform package

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's cabinet Friday gave final approval for a tax reform package expected to give the country's economy a crucial boost as it emerges from more than three years of recession, officials said.

The Economic Planning Agency said the tax reform, if implemented as planned, would push up the growth rate of Japan's gross domestic product (GDP) by an average 0.4 percentage points in real terms each year until March 2000.

The increase in GDP consists of a 0.6 point increase in domestic demand and a 0.2 point decrease in external demand, the agency said.

"The Japanese economy will be more domestic demand-led," Economic Planning Agency Director

General Masahiko Komura said.

The agency said the planned increase in the consumption tax from the current three per cent to five per cent from April 1997 would push up the nation's consumer prices by 1.5 per cent. But it did not give the forecast yearly changes in GDP after the consumption tax hike.

Makoto Kurimoto, an economist at the Japan Research Institute Ltd., said the forecast increase in GDP was "too optimistic."

"Indeed, the reform will be effective until 1996, but the negative effect stemming from the tax hike from 1996 to 1997 is expected to drag on," he said.

The tax hike is estimated to push down fiscal 1997 GDP by up to 0.6 percentage

points year on year, Mr. Kurimoto said.

Satoshi Shimamoto, an economist at the Tokyo branch of MMS International, noted that Japanese incomes have recently fallen.

"How much the tax cuts will expand consumption is still a question," he said.

Besides the income tax cuts and the consumption tax hike, the reform bills also call for the issue of special bonds from April 1995 to June 1996, to finance the time lag between the income tax cuts and the consumption tax hike.

The agency said the new tax system was expected to boost personal consumption by 0.9 per cent, housing investment by 1.1 per cent, and corporate capital investment by 0.4 points by March 2000.

But it is also expected to raise imports by 1.1 per cent but to lower exports by 0.2 per cent.

Earlier Friday, the agency reported in its monthly report that the nation's economy was "heading toward recovery, although at a gradual pace." The overall economic diagnosis is unchanged from the previous month, when the agency declared a de facto end to three-and-a-half years of recession.

The government aims to complete legislative procedures for the package by the end of this year, officials said.

The package of national tax reform bills were to be sent to parliament later in the day.

The tax cuts would total \$5.5 trillion yen (\$55 billion) next year, in line with reductions this year.

Ukrainian president presents 'last chance' economic reforms

KIEV (AFP) — New Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma has submitted a "last chance" programme of economic reforms to parliament focusing on price decontrol, fighting inflation, land sales and social support for the most disadvantaged parts of the population.

"This programme is the Ukraine's last chance," he told parliament in his inaugural speech. "I intend to go on the offensive, because if we do not remedy the situation, we'll be left by the wayside."

Mr. Kuchma was elected president in July after assuring voters he would see to an economic rapprochement with Russia. He succeeds Leonid Kravchuk as president.

Mr. Kuchma, who worked out his economic programme with his advisors and with experts from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), said that "we've lost a lot of time. We have not yet won economic independence, since in 1991 we received only some supposed powers that actually lacked any real content."

He noted that Ukrainian gross national product (GNP) plunged by 35 per cent between 1991 and 1993, and "nobody has ever experienced such a drop — neither the Americans during the Great Depression of the 1930s, nor the Soviet Union during World War II."

The programme comes a few days



Leonid Kuchma after Ukraine obtained \$360 million conversion of countries in transition and the announcement of the release in the near future of a loan from the World Bank of \$400 million to \$500 million.

The president does not need formal parliamentary approval for his economic reforms, but the deputies must pass the budget and the constitutional changes entailed by agricultural reform.

The planned reforms include reduction of the budget deficit from 20 per cent of GDP at present to six per cent in 1996, cutting subsidies, decontrolling many prices, and the end of granting loans at special low interest rates.

They also call for privatising all small companies next year, and big and medium-sized companies over three years, land privatisation, and introduction of the Grivna currency to replace the present karbovanets (coupon).

Record low British inflation reduce chances of interest rate hike

LONDON (AFP) — Further hikes in British interest rates were increasingly remote after underlying inflation plummeted to a surprise record low.

The retail price index, or headline inflation, rose by 2.2 per cent in September, on a 12-month basis, compared to 2.4 per cent in August. This was below analysts' expectations of 2.4 per cent.

Underlying inflation, said to be the more reliable indicator, fell to a record post World War II low of 2.0 per cent in September on a 12-month basis from 2.3 per cent in August, again below analysts' expectations of 2.2 per cent.

"The inflation figures are exceptional — very, very good indeed. It just shows the extent of disinflation pressures within the retail sector," said James Barry, UK economist at Morgan Grenfell.

The data also showed the number of people unemployed in September had fallen by 28,000 to a total of 2,566,000, taking the rate to 9.1 per cent of the working population, down from 9.2 per cent in August.

Analysts had forecast a decline of 20,000.

Average personal earnings rose by 3.75 per cent in the 12 months to the end of August, unchanged from July. This was in line with analysts' expectations.

The underlying inflation fi-

gures, which exclude mortgage interest payments, sparked off renewed debate on whether last month's 0.5 per cent hike in interest rates to 5.75 per cent — the first for almost five years — was premature.

Nick Stamenkovic, economist at DKB International said: "It calls into question the latest rate hike a few weeks ago (on Sept. 12). It certainly lowers expectations of another early move by the authorities."

David Coleman, economist at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce said: "The one (rate hike) we have had is difficult to justify, and looking ahead there is no need for further increases."

Tim Melville-Ross, director-general of the influential Institute of Directors, said the inflation figures proved that the recent rise in interest rates was "premature."

Many key sectors of the economy were still subdued "and any further monetary tightening at this stage would be counter-productive," he said.

The Treasury said underlying inflation had now been below three per cent for a year for the first time in 30 years.

It remains in line with the government's target of between one and four per cent a year until 1997, by which time a general election must be called.

New Zealand records highest growth in OECD

WELLINGTON (AFP) — New Zealand has claimed to have the fastest growth rate in the OECD group but also learnt from its central bank that the economy is experiencing greater inflationary pressures than it thought likely a month ago.

Reserve Bank governor Don Brash told a parliamentary committee he had been picking a moderate increase in underlying inflation in forecasts but now pressure had increased.

"Certainly, we seem to be seeing even stronger economic growth than anticipated — and therefore potentially greater risks to underlying inflation," he said.

Statistics New Zealand said gross domestic product in the year to June had grown 6.1 per cent, the highest annual level of economic activity since 1984.

Acting Finance Minister

Wyatt Creech said in a statement New Zealand's economic growth rate was "now far and away the highest" among Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.

"The existing aspect of this very strong growth is that it is high-quality growth, built on sound economic policy fundamentals rather than government pump-priming," Mr. Creech said. "There is every reason to expect this growth to continue long into the future."

However Mr. Brash's comments make it clear New Zealanders now face higher interest rates.

He said there were also some signs that pricing behaviour would be affected by the higher headline inflation rate rather than the underlying inflation rate, again implying "rather greater risks" for underlying inflation.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY OCTOBER 16, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The daytime has an element of protection and helpfulness that works well with whatever you decide to do. Invoke your most expansive scope of action and expect big results. Expand in all directions.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Go where you can imbue yourself with the best tenets and philosophy under which to exist. The evening is fine for your family.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You keep thinking of money problems but you can figure out a way of handling them and gaining a greater abundance in the future.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Get rid of that mental confusion and think logically to get your affairs in better order. Avoid driving too fast and stay safe.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Think over what is your best mode of procedure in the future. You have several options open to you. Choose the best one.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You are doubtful about your standing with one who means much to you, so take the initiative and find out. Be charming to all you encounter.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Worldly affairs are on your mind during the day, so go over your position in life carefully and know how to proceed with your efforts.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Study into a better philosophy which can help you to become more prosperous and happy in the days ahead towards those under your roof.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Find the right way to change your mate's views and this can become a very happy day for you all. Retire early for tomorrow will be hectic.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Situations arise which will require you think both ideally and practically. Plan next week's activities intelligently.

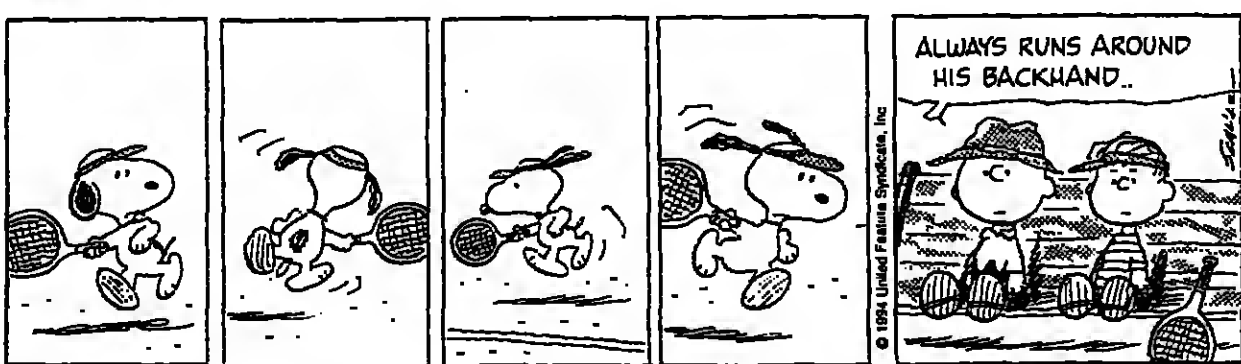
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Do something thoughtful for one who has done you many favours and show your gratitude towards this individual. Rest this evening.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Get that person you like to accompany you at some recreational activity and then you can have a delightful time in their company.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Home matters are important now, so don't go along with those who want to take you away from them. Show devotion to those under your roof.

Birthstone of October: Opal Tourmaline

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

INGGA

HOEL

SIGUNE

AERIPT

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: HEFTY BOOTH DENOTE MODIFY

Answer: How the runners measured the distance to the finish line — FOOT BY FOOT

THE Daily Crossword

by Richard Thomas

ACROSS

- 1 Fellow
- 2 Blat
- 3 Molar offering
- 4 Thruway section
- 5 Can chief
- 6 Ad
- 7 (Improvised)
- 8 Above, in Hanover
- 9 Heads
- 10 Incorporal
- 11 Judge
- 12 In one's right mind
- 13 Countryman, in Scotland
- 14 Heads
- 15 Shady garden shelter
- 16 Missionary
- 17 Gumbo
- 18 Church law
- 19 Ridge
- 20 (Routinely Derby winner)
- 21 Fatty acid
- 22 Signified
- 23 Heads
- 24 Full of fight
- 25 Cooperator's
- 26 Johnny
- 27 "Oh, give me
- 28 Took a break
- 29 Heads
- 30 Kind of skirt
- 31 Persian Gulf
- 32 Lion part
- 33 Pantomime
- 34 Ground
- 35 Literary conflict
- 36 "relief"
- 37 Cupid
- 38 Border on
- 39 Fandango
- 40 Clan member
- 41 Vegetate
- 42 Long in the tooth
- 43 Optical device
- 44 Wisdom
- 45 godesses
- 46 The
- 47 (Poker) novel
- 48 Pumpy pests
- 49 One
- 50 million

DOWN

- 1 Strife
- 2 Vagrant
- 3 Long in the tooth
- 4 Optical device
- 5 Wisdom
- 6 The
- 7 (Poker) novel
- 8 Pumpy pests
- 9 One
- 10 million
- 11 Hangout
- 12 Egyptian dancing girls
- 13 Playmate
- 14 Hermit
- 15 Houston pro
- 16 Worst part
- 17 Lion part
- 18 Pantomime
- 19 Ground
- 20 Literary conflict
- 21 "relief"
- 22 Cupid
- 23 Border on
- 24 Fandango
- 25 Clan member
- 26 Vegetate
- 27 Long in the tooth
- 28 Optical device
- 29 Wisdom
- 30 godesses
- 31 The
- 32 (Poker) novel
- 33 Pumpy pests
- 34 One
- 35 million
- 36 Hangout
- 37 Egyptian dancing girls
- 38 Playmate
- 39 Hermit
- 40 Houston pro
- 41 Worst part
- 42 Lion part
- 43 Pantomime
- 44 Ground
- 45 Literary conflict
- 46 "relief"
- 47 Cupid
- 48 Border on
- 49 Fandango
- 50 Clan member
- 51 Vegetate
- 52 Long in the tooth
- 53 Optical device
- 54 Wisdom
- 55 godesses
- 56 The
- 57 (Poker) novel
- 58 Pumpy pests
- 59 One
- 60 million

Puzzle solved:

ACROSS: 1. Fellow, 2. Blat, 3. Molar offering, 4. Thruway section, 5. Can chief, 6. Ad, 7. (Improvised), 8. Above, in Hanover, 9. Heads, 10. Incorporal, 11. Judge, 12. In one's right mind, 13. Countryman, in Scotland, 14. Heads, 15. Shady garden shelter, 16. Missionary, 17. Gumbo, 18. Church law, 19. Ridge, 20. (Routinely Derby winner), 21. Fatty acid, 22. Signified, 23. Heads, 24. Full of fight, 25. Cooperator's, 26. Johnny, 27. "Oh, give me", 28. Took a break, 29. Heads, 30. Kind of skirt, 31. Persian Gulf, 32. Lion part, 33. Pantomime, 34. Ground, 35. Literary conflict, 36. "relief", 37. Cupid, 38. Border on, 39. Fandango, 40. Clan member, 41. Vegetate, 42. Long in the tooth, 43. Optical device, 44. Wisdom, 45. godesses, 46. The, 47. (Poker) novel, 48. Pumpy pests, 49. One, 50. million.

DOWN: 1. Strife, 2. Vagrant, 3. Long in the tooth, 4. Optical device, 5. Wisdom, 6. The, 7. (Poker) novel, 8. Pumpy pests, 9. One, 10. million, 11. Hangout, 12. Egyptian dancing girls, 13. Playmate, 14. Hermit, 15. Houston pro, 16. Worst part, 17. Lion part, 18. Pantomime, 19. Ground, 20. Literary conflict, 21. "relief", 22. Cupid, 23. Border on, 24. Fandango, 25. Clan member, 26. Vegetate, 27. Long in the tooth, 28. Optical device, 29. Wisdom, 30. godesses, 31. The, 32. (Poker) novel, 33. Pumpy pests, 34. One, 35. million, 36. Hangout, 37. Egyptian dancing girls, 38. Playmate, 39. Hermit, 40. Houston pro, 41. Worst part, 42. Lion part, 43. Pantomime, 44. Ground, 45. Literary conflict, 46. "relief", 47. Cupid, 48. Border on, 49. Fandango, 50. Clan member, 51. Vegetate, 52. Long in the tooth, 53. Optical device, 54. Wisdom, 55. godesses, 56. The, 57. (Poker) novel, 58. Pumpy pests, 59. One, 60. million.

Financial Markets
in co-operation with
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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 13/10/94	New York Close 14/10/94
Sterling Pound	1.5895	1.5960
Deutsche Mark	1.5284	1.5173
Swiss Franc	1.2730	1.2625
French Franc	5.2405	5.2138
Japanese Yen	99.40	98.05
European Currency Unit	1.2470	1.2540

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European Opening at 9:00 AM GMT

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.51	5.37	5.62	6.12
Sterling Pound	5.31	5.75	6.12	6.87
Deutsche Mark	4.75	5.00	5.12	5.50
Swiss Franc	3.56	3.87	4.06	4.50
French Franc	5.25	5.43	5.75	6.25
Japanese Yen	2.06	2.12	2.25	2.56
European Currency Unit	5.47	5.81	6.13	6.65

Interest rate for deposits: 1.25% (1.25% for 12 months, 1.00% for 6 months, 0.75% for 3 months, 0.50% for 1 month)

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6940	0.6950
Sterling Pound	1.1054	1.1109
Deutsche Mark	0.4566	0.4569
Swiss Franc	0.5492	0.5519
French Franc	0.1329	0.1336
Japanese Yen	0.2059	0.2094
Dutch Guilder	0.4076	0.4096
Swedish Krona	0.0447	0.0449
Italian Lira	0.0447	0.0449
Belgian Franc	0.0447	0.0449

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8250	1.8450
Lebanese Lira	0.040825	0.042500
Saudi Riyal	0.1850	0.1855
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3170	2.3600
Qatari Riyal	0.1695	0.1917
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2170
Omani Riyal	1.7400	1.8120
UAE Dirham	0.1883	0.1900
Greek Drachma	0.2725	0.3150
Cypriot Pound	1.2150	1.2520

APEC businessmen
want free trade in
the region by 2010

JAKARTA (AFP) — A group of businessmen Saturday handed over a report to the current chairman of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, Indonesian President Suharto, proposing that free trade in the region be reached by 2010.

"We are encouraging the leaders to encourage their economies to reach the concept of free trade by the year 2010," Les MacCraw, who co-chairs the Pacific Business Forum (PBF) told President Suharto when handing over the group's report.

The report of the PBF, comprising 33 private business representatives of APEC's 18 member economies, said developed APEC economies should achieve free trade and investment

liberalisation in the region by 2002 and no later than 2010 for the other member economies.

The report also said that the goal should be adopted this year and that APEC should produce concrete results this year in order to sustain its role as a policy forum which would guide the growth of the region.

It recommended that the leaders of APEC should immediately adopt a policy of standstill on the introduction of new trade and investment barriers.

They should also adopt the principles of a non-binding investment code into domestic laws where appropriate and implement the Uruguay Round commitments as well as undertake further market opening measures.

GCC study: GATT deal to boost
Arab Gulf petrochemical exports

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The new GATT trade agreement will open up world markets for petrochemical exports by Arab Gulf states and encourage them to press ahead with new projects, according to an official Gulf study.

The accord reached under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), signed by more than 120 countries in Morocco early this year, will also allow Gulf nations to boost industrial exports as most customs barriers will gradually come down, said the study by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) secretariat.

Although crude oil is not included, the GATT deal will have an indirect positive effect on demand as it will accelerate economic growth in industrial countries and other key oil importers, it said.

The study, published this week in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) finance and industry ministry's bulletin, said European custom tariffs on petrochemicals would be

gradually cut to between 5.5 and 6.5 per cent as from next year.

"There is no doubt this reduction in tariffs will give a strong boost to Gulf petrochemical exports," the Riyadh-based secretariat said. "The United States will be the most attractive market for those exports as tariffs will be cut to around four per cent. These factors will make investment in petrochemicals more feasible and consequently expand the sector."

The GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE — are the main petrochemical producers in the Middle East, accounting for the bulk of the region's output of nearly 14 million tonnes per year.

The six members and other Arab oil producers have pumped in more than \$18 billion to set up 913 petrochemical projects in an effort to diversify their economies and reduce reliance on volatile oil earnings.

From around \$863 million

in 1983, GCC petrochemical exports surged to more than \$3 billion in 1992 and the figure is expected to steadily increase after the GATT accord takes effect in 1995.

Most of the GCC petrochemical exports go to the European Union (EU), and the six members have complained that high customs tariffs there are blocking expansion of this sector at a time when crude prices have remained weak.

Several years of negotiations between the two sides on a free-trade pact that will tear down tariffs on petrochemicals and other products have produced no agreement as the Europeans fear their markets will be flooded with cheap Gulf products that could threaten their independent petrochemical industry.

Petrochemical and other oil-related industries in the Gulf are the most feasible in the world given the region's enormous oil and gas reserves, standing at around 630 billion barrels and 40 trillion cubic metres.

Encouraged by the GATT

agreement and progress in talks with the EU in the past two years Gulf states have started to set up new petrochemical projects and expand existing units. According to an official regional study, Arabs will have to spend around \$21 billion on such projects.

"The GATT accord will also have a positive impact on Gulf exports of clothes and other manufactured products," the GCC study said.

But it warned GCC governments against providing subsidies to petrochemical and other sectors as this could prompt other states to raise tariffs to compensate any loss as it is stipulated by the GATT accord. It said most Gulf nations were selling associated gas at low prices to petrochemical plants and this could be interpreted by other countries as subsidies.

"Resorting to compensation tariffs by other countries will negatively affect Gulf petrochemical exports," the study said.

Egypt seen struggling to maintain
cotton exports at '93 bumper levels

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's cotton producers, plagued by a slump in this year's harvest and hitches in the industry's liberalisation plans, still expect to match last year's bumper levels, experts say.

But to do so Egypt will have to import cheaper short staple cotton to help meet domestic demand and free up its higher quality — and higher-priced — long and extra long staples for international sales.

"They will concentrate on exports and sell as much as they can," a U.S. embassy agricultural expert said this week.

This year's crop, hit by boll

worm after the government introduced sweeping changes in pest control methods, is expected to be down about a quarter from last year's harvest.

Farmers near the northern town of Damanhour, where much of the high quality 'Giza 70' cotton is grown, report yields down by as much as a half on 1993 levels.

The area of land given over to cotton growing also shrank this year by 15 per cent to around 720,000 acres (290,000 hectares) after some farmers, discouraged by slow state payment for their cotton, switched to other crops.

The production slump fol-

lows a rise in output last year to an eight-year high of around 416,000 tonnes of seed cotton and a similar surge in exports, as Egypt capitalised on crop failures in China, India and Pakistan to regain a foothold in world markets it once dominated.

This year's crop is barely expected to match domestic cotton demand of 315,000 tonnes. With a 65,000 tonne overhang of high quality stock from previous years, this would imply import requirement of at least 55,000 tonnes if exports are to be maintained at last year's 120,000 tonnes.

The low crop also comes

just as Egypt is attempting to liberalise the cotton industry, allowing private companies to compete for the first time against state firms for the cotton.

One Egyptian businessman, Mahmoud Wahba, has bought 10-year leases on 17 of the country's cotton gins, and has contracted to buy 130,000 tonnes of cotton from the farmers — more than a third of the expected crop.

But few others have followed his lead.

Plans to revive the Alexandria Cotton Exchange — due to reopen for trade last month — are on hold because of the low crop and difficulty of reintroducing free market practices.

Sunday
Times
joins
price war

LONDON (R) — The Sunday Times, Britain's best-selling broadsheet Sunday newspaper, joined a widening price war Friday with an announcement it was slashing its cover price in half to 50 pence (80 cents).

The Sunday Times is a star in publishing tycoon Rupert Murdoch's News International PLC's stable of newspapers, itself a subsidiary of Mr. Murdoch's Australian-based News Corp. Ltd.

"We make a very large profit. We can afford this," John Witherow, the newspaper's acting editor, told Sky Television.

The Times, the Sunday paper's daily stablemate, started a price war in September 1993 by slashing its cover price first to 30 pence (48 cents), then to 20 pence (32 cents). Media industry share analysts estimate that Mr. Murdoch is losing £50 million (\$80 million) a year in the circulation war.

Its rivals, the Daily Telegraph, controlled by Canadian magnate Conrad Black's Hollinger Inc. and Newspaper Publishing's Independent, reluctantly followed suit. They both now sell for 30 pence (48 cents) Monday to Friday.

Overall newspaper share prices fall with each price cut. The Sunday Times, which announced its price cut in a blaze of television advertisements, will now cost 40 pence (65 cents) less than its competitor The Observer, which declined comment on the move.

It will be half the price of another rival, The Independent on Sunday, but editor Ian Jack said he was not planning an immediate matching price cut.

A spokeswoman for The Sunday Times said the paper was planning to increase its print run this weekend, in part because of the price cut but also because the paper was planning serialisations of two books about her to the throne Prince Charles' troubled marriage to Princess Diana.

"This is the perfect opportunity to cut the price of the paper," Mr. Witherow said.

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Talal Mansoor of Qatar celebrates as he crosses the finish line of the men's 200m final timed Saturday at the 12th Asian Games. Talal won the gold medal, winning the gold and equalling the Asian record (AFP photo)

Qatar's Mansoor wins sprints; Kazakhstan wins at long distances

HIROSHIMA (AP) — Qatar's Talal Mansoor reinforced his claim as Asia's sprint king Saturday with his second gold medal of the Asian Games, while Kazakhstan won the games' two longest races.

Wang Junxia, star member of "Ma's Army" of Chinese distance runners, picked up the pace near the end even though she was unbalanced, but couldn't match her world record in winning the women's 10,000 metres, a half-hour race.

Two outings in the neighbourhood of four hours brought gold to Kazakhstan's Sergei Korepanov, who won the 50-kilometre walk in 3 hours, 54 minutes, 37 seconds, and Andrei Kivilev, who won the 169.44-kilometre (105.25-mile) cycling road race in 4:31:53.

China, which added six golds to its collection Saturday, already had decisively clinched the overall medals championship for its third consecutive games.

Its gold total rose to 133, while South Korea clinched second place ahead of archrival Japan by winning third badminton golds, the men's field hockey title and one gold in judo.

The Koreans had 62 to 56 for Japan, which won one in track and field and three in judo.

China led in total medals with 279. Japan had 202, South Korea 177 and Kazakhstan 77, including 25 gold. Aside from track and

cycling, Kazakhstan won the water polo gold Saturday.

Uzbekistan won two track and field events, and Ramil Ganiev claimed the title of Asia's best all-around athlete by winning the 10-event decathlon.

Indonesia won two badminton golds to go with the men's team title it won earlier.

Mansoor, already the 100-metre winner, won the 200 Saturday, also in a games record time.

His 20.41 beat the 8-year-old mark of 20.71. Koji Ito of Japan was second in 20.70. Mansoor is retiring after these games, his third as 100-metre champion.

In the women's 10,000 Wang and teammate Dong Li left two Japanese behind at about the halfway mark and Wang left Dong behind with 4,000 metres to go. She picked up the pace over the last 2,000, running the fastest women's 10,000 this year and setting a games record in 30 minutes, 50.34 seconds. She had set the world record of 29:31.78 last year. Dong also beat the old games mark of 31:50.98, taking the silver in 31:31.08.

Wang, one of two world record holders coached by Ma Junren, also holds the world mark in the 3,000, which she did not enter here.

Ganiev won the decathlon with 8,005 points, breaking the games mark of 7,799. Teammate Oleg Vertelnikov took the silver with 7,702. China's Cai Min, who had

stood second after seven events, dropped out with an injury after the pole vault.

Uzbekistan's other gold came in the women's javelin, where Oksana Yargina upset favoured Ha Xiaoyan of China with a throw of 64.62 metres. South Korea's Lee Young-Sup also beat Ha, 62.30 to 62.08.

China finished 1-2 in all four track and field events it won Saturday. Aside from Wang and Dong in the women's 10,000, it was Li Tong and Chen Yanhao in the men's 110-metre hurdles, Yao Wei and Li Jing in the women's long jump, and Sui Ximei and Zhang Liuhong in the women's shot put.

Li won a games record 13.30 seconds. Yao also broke a games mark with her jump of 6.91 metres, and Sui won with a 20.45-metre toss. Japan's Takahisa Yoshida edged South Korea's Lee Jin-Tae 2.27 to 2.24 in the men's high jump.

Kivilev also led a 1-2 finish in the men's cycling race. He took the lead after about 127 kilometres (79 miles), and teammate Alexandre Vinokourov made up about a minute over the last 14 kilometres (8 miles) to match his time, but not his medal.

China swept all three medals in the women's 56.48-kilometre (35-mile) cycling road race, with all three medalists times in 1:57:10. Guo Xinghong won the gold.

China also won the men's basketball gold for the third consecutive games, defeating

South Korea 100-72 in the final. Japan beat the Philippines' professionals 79-76 for the bronze medal.

South Korea beat India 3-2 for the men's field hockey title. Defending champion Pakistan, which lost a penalty shootout to South Korea in the semifinals, took the bronze by drubbing Japan 6-0.

Kazakhstan captured its water polo gold with a perfect 5-0 record, beating Singapore 2-17 Saturday in its final game. China beat Japan 9-5, leaving the Chinese with the silver and Japan with the bronze.

Defending champion Malaysia beat Thailand 15-9, 15-13 in the gold medal game in sepak takraw, a southeast game that resembles volleyball except that players can't use their hands to send the ball over the net. Singapore defeated Indonesia 15-10, 18-13 for the bronze.

Japan's judo winners Saturday were Olympic silver medalist Ayoko Tamura over China's Li Aiyue by superiority in the women's 48-kilogramme division, Noriko Anno over China's Qiao Yamin by a throw in the women's open class, and Katsuyuki Masubuchi over South Korea's Lee Joon-Young by a pin in the men's open class.

South Korea's Kim Kyuk was judged the winner over Japan's Rynji Sonoda in the men's 60-kilogramme class.

The nations winning the day's badminton golds mostly

had been decided in advance: The men's single was an all-Indonesian affair, and only South Koreans were left in the women's and mixed doubles.

But South Korea's Bang Soo-Hyun, the Olympic silver medalist, won 11-4, 11-6 in women's singles against Japan's Hisako Mizui, who eliminated favourite Susi Susanti of Indonesia in the semifinals.

Indonesians Rexy Ronald Mainaky and Ricky Achmad Suhadja took the men's doubles crown 15-10, 15-2 against Malaysia's Cheah Soon Kit and Soo Beng Kiang.

In men's singles, Heriyanto Arbi beat fellow Indonesian Joko Suprianto 15-7, 15-1. Shun Eun-Jung and Jang Hye-Ok beat South Korean compatriots Chung So-Young and Gil Young-Ab 15-9, 15-3 for the women's doubles title. But Chung teamed with Yoo-Sung for the mixed doubles title, winning 15-10, 15-12 against Jang and Kang Kyung-Jin.

Indonesia has won the men's team title and South Korea the women's earlier. China and Japan will battle for the men's volleyball gold on Sunday. In semifinals Saturday, China beat Kazakhstan and Japan defeated South Korea.

Kuwait edged South Korea 2-1 for the soccer bronze medal. Uzbekistan and China will battle for the gold Sunday.

Money makes Qatar's coaches run

HIROSHIMA (R) — How come a nation of half a million can win almost as many gold medals as a nation of one billion?

Money and devotion to sport is the answer according to the foreign coaches of Qatar which is once again defying its small size to make an impression on the medals table.

With three days left in the Asian Games, Qatar has two gold medals, only one behind massive India and with good hopes of picking up several more.

"If you have money, you can get good coaches," said Qatar's Anatoli Klimentko of Ukraine who coaches Qatar's discus, javelin.

Klimentko said the facilities offered to foreign coaches in Qatar, a small oil-rich Gulf sheikhdom of just 500,000 people, compared with the best in the world.

The perks have attracted coaches from many countries, including several from

the East Bloc, struggling to find jobs after the collapse of state funding for massive sports machines under communist rule.

They make impressive reading — two Bulgarians, two Ukrainians, two Hungarians and one Czech, accompanied by two masseurs, one from Bulgaria and the other from Ukraine.

Ukrainian jump coach Oleg Sergueev believes the athletes themselves are also good raw material in Qatar, once their mental attitudes are changed.

He said the Qataris have shown at the Asian Games they can fight for first places with the Asian sporting superpowers such as China.

"They have the mental attitude now," he said.

Qatar's golds have come in the glamour men's 100 metres and men's 400 metres events.

The 200 metres gold also seems going Qatar's way, with 100 metres champion Talal Mansoor Al Rahim and the 400 metres champion Ibrahim Muflih both in the final.

Their best-known athlete is Mohammad Sulaiman, the Asian record holder over 5,000 metres and a top ranked athlete in the world.

Coaches say what differentiates Qatar from other rich Asian countries outside the Eastern Asian fold of China, South Korea and Japan is its rulers' interest in putting money into sport.

"They have an efficient sports organisation, they are interested in building the sports infrastructure, so they are succeeding," Sergueev said.

But in the end, the main factor in developing sport in Qatar is money that the state liberally allocates to hire the coaches.

Athlete sells games medals to emigrate

HIROSHIMA (R) — A male athlete from a former Soviet republic, possibly Uzbekistan, has sold his Asian Games gold and silver medals to emigrate back to his native Russia, a Japanese newspaper reported Saturday.

The description of the athlete fitted Uzbekistan canoeist Andrei Kolganov who won a gold medal in the men's four man kayak and a silver medal in the men's two-man kayak.

The Asahi Shimbun said the gold medal was sold for 100,000 yen (\$1,000) and the silver for 50,000 yen (\$500) to a coin shop in Hiroshima almost immediately after they were won.

The 24-year-old athlete said with money from selling the medals he planned to emigrate with his family to Russia within a month of returning home.

The medal sale is likely to anger further small Asian nations who believe the five

Central Asian republics — in the games for the first time with many tall, blond, blue-eyed competitors — have no place in the Asian Games.

"It is very regrettable to sell the medals, but my life in my country is difficult. I need the money to emigrate to Russia where living conditions are better," the athlete said.

He complained his present monthly salary was only about 1,100 yen (\$11).

Some Russians, many of them Christians, living in the mainly Muslim republics, say they are treated as minorities in the newly independent republics.

"We no longer give full play to sport in my country. I can not explain in words why I am selling the medal. I suppose rich Japanese cannot understand (my feeling)," the athlete said.

The coin shop owner said he was surprised at obtaining the Asian Games medals so early.

"I have no intention of selling them. I will keep them for my private collection," the 45-year-old owner said.

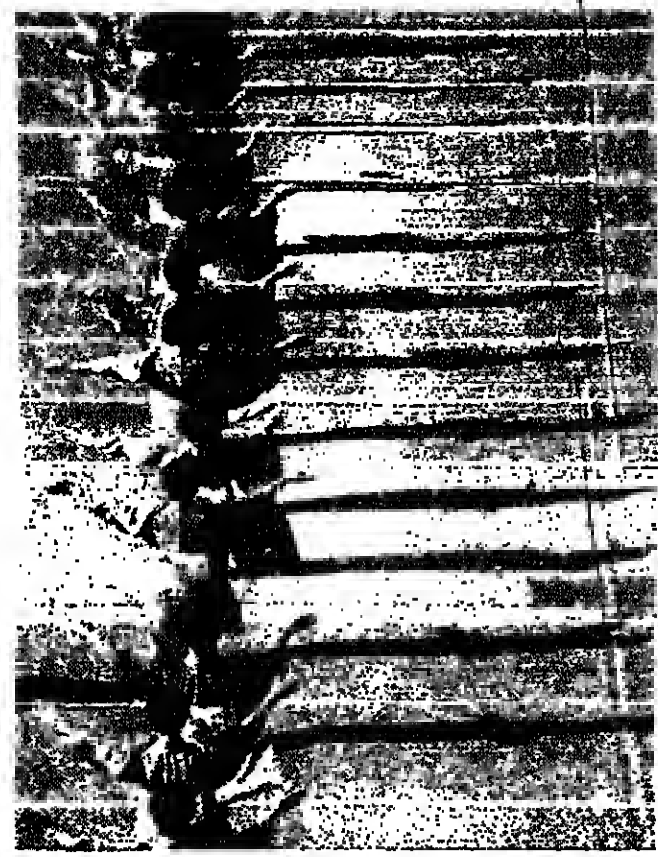
Games officials said the cost of a gold medal containing four grammes of pure gold is 50,000 yen (\$500) and the cost of a silver medal is 30,000 yen (\$300).

The five Central Asian nations once part of the Soviet Union — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — have done well in their first games.

Kazakhstan with 22 golds and 25 silvers and Uzbekistan with seven golds and nine silvers lead the five.

But Thai athletics coach Ariyamongkol Sulapong said entry of the republics caused many small nations to withdraw teams in several events because they knew they could not compete.

"The athletes from Central Asia are European, not Asians," Sulapong said.



REHEARSALS: A group of Japanese women in traditional kimono performs on the track of the Big Arch Stadium during rehearsals for the 12th Asian Games closing ceremony due Sunday (AFP photo)

Games set condom consumption record

HIROSHIMA (AFP) — The Asian Games athletes village may stop giving free condoms to competitors who seem to prize them more than they do medals.

The organisers, who laid on free contraceptives to stop the spread of AIDS, had planned for three packets per athlete over the two weeks. But Shinichi Miyamori explained that some of the 4,000-strong contingent of competitors were grabbing up to 50.

"Headquarters is considering stopping the condoms because too many have been taken," said the games village pharmacist.

Miyamori suspects many of the condoms have become "souvenirs." And they are certainly not being used in Hiroshima's sex-parlours

which are turning away foreign athletes and games officials.

The "soapland" parlours, illegal but widespread, say they apply a Japanese-only policy to stop the spread of acquired immuno-deficiency syndrome (AIDS) which many Japanese still see as a foreign disease.

"The athletes and officials come here often but we politely reject them," said the manager at the Renaissance, one of the 30 parlours in Hiroshima's "Tobonsan Bars" district.

"Asian Games or not, we have always turned down any gaijin (foreigner)," he added. "It is the same at other shops. We all fear AIDS."

AIDS has had a severe impact on Japan's sex indus-

try, and has led to an even greater clampdown on foreigners.

Sex gadget shops in the notorious red light zone of Nagaregawa in central Hiroshima are thriving with the influx of Asian Games family members.

"They buy many kinds of things. But the vibrators of different prices sell well," said the woman owner of Adult Shop Love chain.

"They speak different languages, Chinese, Korean and Arab. But I don't ask them where they are from."

The organising committee has been distributing booklets in 11 languages warning against AIDS as well as the disappearing condoms.

S. Korea lose soccer bronze

HIROSHIMA (R) — South Korea scored in the fourth minute but could not hold off Kuwait in the soccer bronze medal game at the Asian Games Saturday.

Just two days after losing a wild semifinal they should have won against Uzbekistan, South Korea again outplayed their opponent only to lose.

Kuwait came back with goals by Wail Al Habashi in the seventh minute and another by Fawaz Al Ahmad in the 19th minute for the 2-1 victory.

South Korea outshot Uzbekistan 27-4 in their semifinal Thursday, only to lose on a soft second-half goal.

Wang's report card — could do better

HIROSHIMA (R) — Chinese distance runner Wang Junxia wants to do better, but she needs help.

The winner Saturday of the women's 10,000 metres Asian Games title said she feared a lack of competition would stymie her relentless assault on the record books.

"I don't want to appear arrogant and it doesn't matter if you are talking about China or about Ma's family army. I would like to see better training and faster times in all of Asia. It would be beneficial to all of Asia and help us compete against the Europeans," she said.

On the face of it, it is difficult to imagine that the 19-year-old world record holder and world champion, star of coach Ma Junren's stable of athletes, had much to complain about.

Her winning time Saturday of 30 minutes 50.34 seconds was the seventh fastest ever

and the quickest this year by more than 18 seconds, despite lacklustre opposition from four other runners, one a barefoot 13-year-old from Burma.

The world record holder at both 10,000 metres and 3,000 metres — her world mark is 29:31.78 — paced herself like clockwork during the race and then took the line with an astonishing 30-second sprint over the last 200 metres.

Teammate Dong Li helped on track with her pacing, but she got most help from the gallery, where Ma sat holding court amidst his coterie of running disciples.

A cigarette in one hand and two stopwatches in the other, Ma would lift his index finger as a signal for Wang to maintain her pace. A circular motion was his instruction to turn on the speed.

With a forest of cameras and journalists around him and partly obscuring his view

of the track, Ma was forced to roll up a newspaper to get his message across, using it as a wand to tell her it was time to start.

After Wang's race, Ma echoed Wang's sentiments, saying the rest of Asia needed to improve in order to test his runners.

"That's right, Asia is uniting, the Ma family army is going to help Asian athletes improve," he said.

Wang cast further light on the mysterious disappearance of Ma's family army from the public eye this year and their failure to make it to the lucrative European Grand

Prix circuit.

Their non-appearance had already partly been explained by Ma's revelation that he had organised mass appendix removals from most of his international squad a few months ago, requiring a period of recuperation from the surgeon's knife.

"We ate some spoiled chicken meat in Shenyang and the injury to my leg left me unable to practise for a month," she said.

According to Chinese journalists, the chef at Ma's Shenyang training camp was sacked after the chicken incident.

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Navratilova bows out in Germany

FILDERSTADT, Germany (R) — Martina Navratilova's final tournament in Europe before retirement came to an end after a stubborn performance in a 6-3 3-6 6-4 defeat by German Anke Huber late Friday.

Navratilova, 37, saved six match points before bowing out to the 19-year-old German after an enthralling quarterfinal which lasted two hours 20 minutes.

Slovakia's unseeded Karina Habsudova grabbed some of the limelight for herself by rousing Spain's Wimbledon champion Cocchita Martinez.

Martinez, the world number three, had to receive treatment for an ankle injury throughout the match and succumbed 6-4 6-1 in 84 minutes.

In the semifinals Habsudova meets France's Pierce, who swept aside American Gigi Fernandez 6-0 6-1 with an array of fearsome groundstrokes.

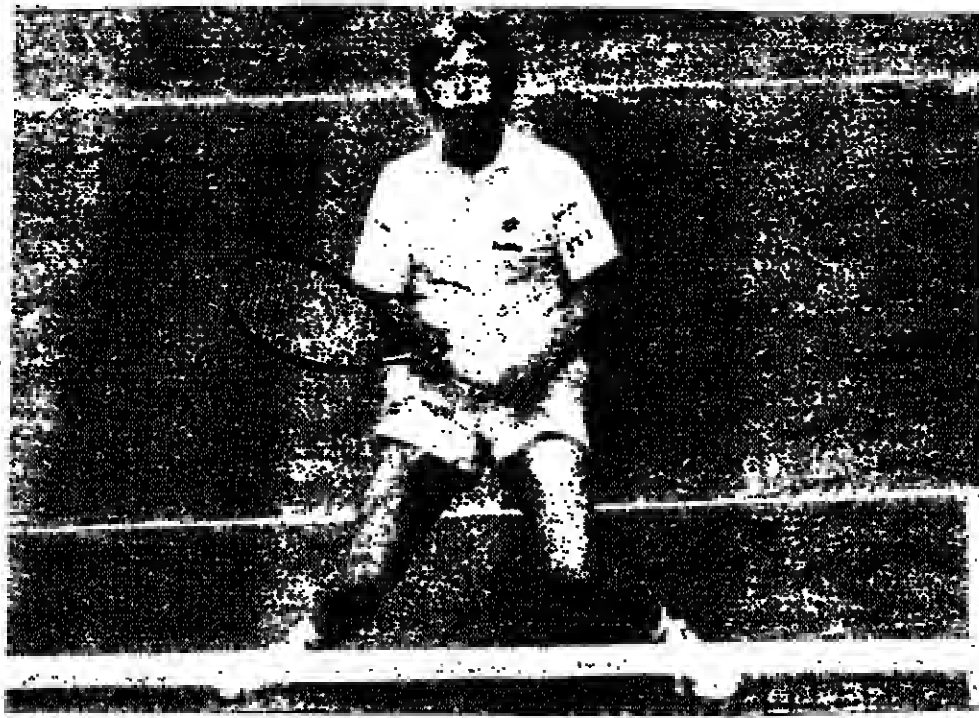
Huber faces American qualifier Marianne Werdel, who took advantage of 14-year-old Swiss Martina Hingis's inexperience on the big points to win her quarterfinal 6-4 6-2 7-6.

Navratilova found it hard to live with Huber's baseline power. The veteran tired in the third set as the German eighth seed made her run about the court.

But Navratilova still managed to come back from 5-2 down in the final set to turn the match into a thriller. In the eighth game the former world number one produced some of her best volleying at the net to save five match points and narrow the gap to 5-3.

She then broke Huber's serve in the next game to reduce the arrears to 5-4. But after saving another match point in the 10th game Navratilova finally wilted.

As the Filderstadt crowd gave her a standing ovation,



Martina Navratilova

Navratilova left a European court for the last time with a wave and a shake of the head — and the gift of an open-topped Porsche sports car

from the tournament organizers.

Hingis, playing only the second professional event of her career, wasted four

match points in the final set.

When the set went to a tiebreak she choked on the important points and lost the decider 7-5.

Al Wihdat keep the lead in Jordan soccer tournament

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The top four positions remained unchanged after the seventh week of the Jordan first division soccer championship was concluded Friday with Al Wihdat retaining the lead for the second week, followed by Al Hussein, Al Ramtha and Al Faisali.

With four weeks left before the first leg is concluded Nov. 11, Al Jazireh continued to improve their standing, moving up to fifth place after their 3-1 win over Shabab Al Hussein, while Al Arabi also moved up to seventh place after their 3-0 win over bottom-placed Al Jeel.

The surprise team of the tournament — newcomers Kufsum — dropped to sixth place after losing 1-0 to Al Wihdat. Al Ahli went further down to eighth place following their 4-3 loss to Al Hussein.

Meanwhile, Al Ramtha handed Al Karmel their 7th consecutive defeat, while titleholders Al Faisali could only manage a 1-1 draw with 9th placed Al Qadissieh.

The seventh week witnessed the highest number of goals — 22 — and Al Hussein still maintained the best scoring record at 34-9.

At Al Hassan sports city in Irbid over 14,000 fans attended Al Wihdat-Kufsum match where Kufsum club displayed a friendly gesture by hanging a banner welcoming Al Wihdat's fans and players, and another encouraging fair play and denouncing violence, which sometimes mars matches.

Newcomers Kufsum proved they were no easy prey and gave their opponents a hard time before Hisham Abdul Mun'em scored Al Wihdat's winning goal in the 65th minute.

Kufsum settled for defeat and fell to sixth place after their shot was blocked by Al Wihdat's goal post.

Meanwhile in Amman, Al Qadissieh earned a point but still remained at a disappointing 9th place after their draw with the titleholders.

Al Qadissieh maintained a fight trip on Al Faisali's strikers Jiryes Tadros, Subhi Awad and Jamal Abu Abed. However they were enraged by a 24th minute goal by Abu Abed, insisting that it had entered the net from the outside.

After Ihab Ma'ali secured the draw, Al Qadissieh retreated to defensive positions, while it was evident that Al Faisali's players blamed one another for losing definite scoring chances. Angry fans jeered their players, and even cheered for rivals Al Wihdat in an attempt to show their

dissatisfaction with their team's current form and standing.

Al Jazireh — threatened by relegation last year — again proved that their advanced standing was not by chance as they climbed to fifth place after their 3-1 win over lowly Shabab Al Hussein.

Hammoudeh Abourah scored Shabab Al Hussein's sole goal from a penalty kick in the 12th minute. However Al Jazireh equalised four minutes later from a remarkable shot from Murad Hassan.

Simon George assisted new recruit Imad Fataftah in adding the second goal in the 32nd minute, ending the first half 2-1.

Al Jazireh's George and Hassan lost some chances before Walid Fataftah netted in the third goal five minutes before the end.

Al Ahli and Al Hussein played the week's most exciting match which witnessed a total of seven goals at Amman Stadium.

Although Husam Hammash opened scoring in the 24th minute, Al Hussein quickly equalised and scored three goals within 11 minutes, the first by Mohammad Shweiter in the 32nd minute followed by the second goal by Mohammad Al Shaqran in the 40th minute and the third by Munib Gharabeh in the 43rd minute to lead 3-1.

Al Ahli's Nart Yadaj, Ahmad Wali and Hammash were a dangerous trio that did not give in easily. Yadaj scored his team's second goal in the 56th minute while the goal post prevented him from equalising.

Hisham Anbar secured Al Hussein's win with a fourth goal in the 77th minute, but Yadaj again delighted fans with his second and his

team's third goal in the 84th minute.

Al Hussein went back to Irbid with a vital 4-3 win that kept them in second place before their important clash with Al Wihdat in the upcoming week.

In another match, Al Ramtha improved their scoring in record in their 5-0 win over lowly Al Karmel who still have no points in the standings after having lost all their matches.

Al Ramtha opened scoring by Hussein Al Shananeh in the 14th minute, while Mouaffaq Abu Hdeib scored the next two goals in the 36th and 50th minutes.

Badran Al Shaqran, Shananeh and Abu Hdeib had more chances before team-mate Issa Azaizeh netted in the fourth goal in the 61st minute.

Fatid Al Shananeh, who seems to have a knack for scoring in the final minutes, sealed his team's convincing win when he scored five minutes before the end.

Al Arabi pleased their fans when they again improved their standing to 7th after an important 3-0 win over 11th placed Al Jeel.

Al Arabi's Ahmad Subh opened scoring the 10th minute, while Al Jeel, who only have one point in the standings, only had one scoring chance blocked by Al Arabi's goal post in the 25th minute.

Al Jeel played better in the second half, but seemed to lose their fighting spirit after Ayman Al Omari added Al Arabi's second goal three minutes into the second half.

Mohammad Alawneh netted in Al Arabi's final goal in the 70th minute.

Al Arabi will next clash with Kufsum as both teams seriously contend for an advanced standing this season.

Standings after 4th week

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts.
Wihdat	7	7	—	—	10	1	14
Hussein	7	6	—	1	24	9	12
Ramtha	7	4	3	—	15	3	11
Faisali	7	3	3	1	13	4	9
Jazireh	7	4	1	2	10	7	9
Kufsum	7	4	—	3	16	16	8
Arabi	7	3	3	1	10	12	7
Ahli	7	2	2	3	10	13	6
Qadissieh	7	1	2	4	9	14	4
St. Al Hussein	7	1	1	5	10	19	3
Jeel	7	—	1	6	3	15	1
Karmel	7	—	—	7	2	20	—

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Schumacher grabs pole at Jerez

JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA, Spain (AFP) — Britain's Nigel Mansell described the final qualifying session of his come-back to Formula One Saturday as "one of the most exciting ever."

"It was like playing poker, deciding when to go out on the track to get a clear lap," he said of the tight Jerez circuit.

Mansell finished third fastest, on the second row of the grid for Sunday's Grand Prix of Europe.

"It's fantastic for Formula One that both the championship contenders are on the front row," Mansell said.

Championship leader Michael Schumacher put his Benetton Ford on pole position, with rival Damon Hill in the Williams Renault on the other front row spot.

Mansell, in the other Williams, said his task Sunday would be a strong place finish to win points for the constructors championship, in which Williams leads Benetton.

"I'm not quite up to speed enough to win at the moment," Mansell said, adding he hoped Hill and Schumacher would "have a great race. They are a jump ahead of everyone else."

Hill was baulked by France's Paul Belmondo in his first try for pole position Saturday, and slid off across a gravel trap in his last run.

"I took a desperate lunge at it," causing him to go off, he admitted, after his dashboard read out showed he was behind Schumacher half way round the lap.

Hill had held provisional pole overnight with Schumacher third. The German explained he had been slowed Friday because a broken bolt on his engine mounting had affected the car's handling.

Pole position was vital. Hill said, as there were few overtaking points on the track and backmarkers would not want to move off the racing line to let the leaders through, because it would be slippery on the track edges.

Hill admitted he would "have to come from behind" in the race.

"That will charge me up overnight," he said, but added with a grin towards Schumacher: "There is more pressure from being in pole position."

Before the session, officials of the ruling Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) staged a "reconciliation" photo opportunity with Hill and Schumacher shaking hands on the pit wall.

Asked if they were really reconciled, Schumacher told the joint press conference that "this is not the place to talk about it."

Ivanisevic and Chang will clash in Seiko Super final

TOKYO (R) — Goran Ivanisevic overcame a tough challenge from Stefan Edberg Saturday to set up a clash with Michael Chang in the final of the Seiko super indoor tennis.

The world number two from Croatia dashed Edberg's hopes of clinching a third Seiko title when he out-powered the Swedish number three seed 6-4, 6-4 in just over an hour.

Sixth seed Chang, the 1989 French Open champion, kept alive his bid to reap his sixth title of the season by running down each and every ball to overwhelm 10th seed Jacco Eltingh of the Netherlands 6-3, 6-4.

Top seed Ivanisevic, showing no trace of the poor form that cost him first-round defeats at the U.S. Open and

last week's Australian Indoor, played a near-flawless game of thundering serve-and-volleying.

His ability to pull off blistering returns and eke out unforced errors from his Swedish opponent ultimately won him the battle.

"I was very focused, played very good tennis. He (Edberg) had only two break points and I served two aces (on them)," said Ivanisevic, who pounded a total of nine aces against Edberg's two.

Edberg said: "My first serves weren't as sharp as they had been — and if you don't play 100 per cent against Goran when he's playing well, you don't get many chances."

The top seed, who has never made it past the semifinal

stage in his last three appearances here, broke Edberg in the ninth game of the first set and the third game of the final set.

"I was putting a lot of pressure on his serve. He didn't put a lot of first serves in and sometimes missed pretty easy volleys," the Croat said.

The victory represents sweet revenge for Ivanisevic who was beaten by Edberg in the final of the Stuttgart Indoor in July. Ivanisevic leads 8-6 in career wins over the world number five.

Chang, an immensely popular figure in Japan, showed his gratitude to the cheering crowd at the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium by bowing deeply after his match against Dutchman

Eltingh, where his consistent and fast-improving serve carried him through.

Both Chang and Ivanisevic will be making their first appearance in the final of the event. The two have played each other three times, with Ivanisevic leading 2-1.

"I've beaten before — at the Grand Slam Cup, which was a very fast surface — so I feel it's not impossible to beat him," said Chang.

"But his best surface is carpet, so it's going to be very difficult beating him," added the world number nine.

Chang has more at stake going into the final. A win would increase his chances of qualifying for the top eight at the season-ending world championships in Frankfurt in November.

Beardsley gives Newcastle victory

LONDON (R) — A Peter Beardsley goal 30 seconds from time gave English League leaders Newcastle a 1-0 win at Crystal Palace Saturday as Kevin Kegan's men stretched their unbeaten record since the start of the season to 14 matches.

Two second-half goals from Chris Sutton helped Blackburn to a 3-2 win over Liverpool in a thrilling match at Ewood Park to move Blackburn second in the table, five points behind Newcastle.

Champions Manchester United, who started the day in fifth place, moved up to fourth with a 1-0 win over West Ham courtesy of an Eric Cantona goal a minute before half-time.

But Everton's woes continued as they were beaten 2-0 at home by Coventry to leave them stranded at the bottom four points behind Ipswich, without a win from their opening 10 matches.

In a dramatic match at Loftus Road, Manchester

City finished with only nine men against Queen's Park Rangers but still beat the Londoners 2-1.

Gary Flitcroft and Paul Walsh scored for city in a two-minute spell midway through the second half, before Rangers pulled a goal back through Clive Wilson.

City then had goalkeeper Andy Dibble and defender Richard Edgell sent off within five minutes of each other.

There was plenty of drama at Filbert Street, too, where strugglers Leicester beat recently revitalised Southampton 4-3 for only their second win of the season.

Leicester seemed to be coasting to victory when they led 4-1 with only two minutes to play. But Matt le Tissier and Iain Dowie scored in the dying seconds to bring their side close to what would have been a remarkable rescue act.

At Highbury, England's two representatives in the European Cup Winners' Cup

came face to face with arsenal beating Chelsea 3-1 after Chelsea took the lead through Dennis Wise.

Two goals from Ian Wright, taking his tally to 10 from his last seven matches, and one from Kevin Campbell gave the Gunners victory.

Newcastle's victory maintained their 100 per cent away record in all cup and league matches this season.

It was their seventh successive away from St. James' Park and rarely looked likely as lowly Crystal Palace played their best football of the

season.

But with just seconds remaining, Beardsley, who missed England's international against Romania through injury Wednesday, proved that even at 33 he is still a master performer.

Collecting the ball outside the box, he made space for himself before blasting a fierce shot past Nigel Martyn in the Palace goal.

Beardsley said afterwards: "You have to feel sorry for Palace because they played very well and probably deserved a draw."

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Mahfouz recovers after attack that shocked Egyptians

CAIRO (Agencies) — Nobel Prize-winning novelist Naguib Mahfouz was reported recovering well Saturday after a knife attack, apparently by an Islamic radical. Fellow writers called the stabbing an assault on freedom of thought in Egypt.

The 83-year-old author, diabetic and nearly blind, was stabbed in the neck several times Friday night as he left his house to attend a weekly meeting with other literary figures. The assassin fled in a car with two accomplices.

Mr. Mahfouz was in excellent condition considering his age, said a doctor at the police hospital. He said the writer was conscious and talking but would remain in the hospital's intensive care unit for at least 72 hours.

No one claimed responsibility for the attack, but police blamed Muslim militants who have carried out a bloody, 2½-year campaign to destabilise the government and install Islamic rule.

Egypt was in shock on Saturday after the attack. "He is Egypt's fourth pyramid," said a teary-eyed Hassan Morsi, a waiter in Casino Al Nil cafe, who has served Mr. Mahfouz his sugar-free Turkish coffee for the past 15 years.

"How can they do this to him? Such a peace-loving man and the pride of the nation?" he said in the Nile-side cafe, where Mr. Mahfouz meets every Friday with a literary group called "Al Harafesh" (the night animals), including producers, actors and celebrities as well as ordinary people.

His friends had been waiting for Mr. Mahfouz at the cafe on Friday evening when a police officer informed them of the attack.

Fathi Hashem, a friend who witnessed the attack, recognised the assailant as someone who attended the Harafesh gatherings.

In the hospital, anxious well-wishers kept up their inquiries. "Every time we pick up the phone, there is someone on the other end asking about Mahfouz," said a hospital official.

"His room is crowded with bouquets of flowers, the hospital visitors' list is full of names of his guests," who were being restricted to the hallways, the official added. Meanwhile, staff in the Ali Baha cafe, which Mr. Mahfouz frequents during the winter, expressed their outrage at the attack.

"He is a national treasure. The West made a hero of him and honoured him. I can't believe that this is how we treat him," said Nader Ibrahim Sayed, a cashier.

"If they (the militants) had a problem with the state, why don't they take it out on the state and leave innocent people alone," Ali Baba's manager, Khaled Abdul Moati said.

Mr. Mahfouz, a critic of religious conservatives and supporter of Arab-Israeli peace, is the only Arab author to have won the Nobel prize.

In 1989, militants threatened him for his banned book "The Children of Our District," in which he depicts God as a father and the prophets as his children. But his friends dismissed the theory that this was behind the attack.

"He was not attacked because of his writings but because he is a symbol of Egypt and (the militants) wanted to attack the state through him," said Mr. Mahfouz's old friend, producer Tawfik Saleh.

Mr. Mahfouz was an easy target, Mr. Saleh said. He always refused bodyguards, and all of Cairo knows the site of his Nile-side home.

Gulf tension eases

(Continued from page 1)

vote before Mr. Kozyrev's arrival, stressed that if the United States submits an agreed-on resolution for a vote Saturday they would have no choice but to vote on it.

Kuwaiti officials said Saturday they were wary of Iraq's pledge to recognise the emirate and that they wanted to see the recognition in writing and soon.

Mr. Perry said the cost of the U.S. buildup involving more than 30,000 troops would cost between \$500 million and \$1 billion if the crisis is resolved in the next three days (see page 12).

In Abu Dhabi, Russia's Kozyrev on Saturday briefed the United Arab Emirates (UAE) president on his peace mission in Iraq and Kuwait.

The official news agency WAM said Kozyrev went straight into talks with UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan after he arrived in Abu Dhabi from Kuwait Saturday.

The Russian minister briefed Sheikh Zayed on the "outcome of his visit to Baghdad as part of Russia's efforts to resolve the current crisis caused by Iraqi threats to Kuwait," the agency said.

He later left for Saudi Arabia where Russian diplomats accompanying the minister said he would meet King Fahd in the Red Sea port of Jeddah before flying to New York late Saturday.

They noted the Saudi trip had not been planned before.

Mr. Kozyrev will brief the U.N. Security Council about the Russian-brokered Iraqi offer to recognise Kuwait.

WAM gave no further details on Mr. Kozyrev's talks in Abu Dhabi but said he praised Sheikh Zayed's "constructive positions towards regional and world issues."

Sheikh Zayed this week joined other Gulf states in sending troops to Kuwait.



Picture of January 1993 shows U.S. Patriot missiles deployed in Kuwait (AFP photo)

Also in Abu Dhabi, Mr. Juppe said the key question was: "Are the Iraqi authorities going to officially accept U.N. resolution 833 and solemnly recognise the sovereignty of Kuwait and its borders, yes or no?"

"The ball is clearly in their court," he added.

He said he had spoken early Saturday with Mr. Kozyrev by telephone who told him Iraq was prepared to recognise the emirate "within conditions and within the terms" of the U.N. resolution.

But he added, "we have to see whether that is really the case. This cannot be solved through a statement."

He said a "swift and unambiguous" statement from Iraq would be a new development "which we will have to take into account."

But the French foreign minister, on his first visit to the UAE, warned that without an official recognition the crisis "will deepen."

"I call on the Iraqi leadership to take a quick and clear decision in this respect without any conditions or restrictions," he said, according to WAM.

Meanwhile, Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid also called for a "clear" statement from Iraq on Kuwait's sovereignty.

Mr. Juppe who arrived from Qatar is also due to visit

Oman and Kuwait "to assure (Kuwaiti) leaders that France stands firmly with them."

He also repeated French condemnation for the Iraqi military build-up.

He said Mr. Kozyrev's mediation was "one of the elements that contribute to finding a solution."

India welcomed Iraq's decision to withdraw its troops from the Kuwaiti border and said all countries in the region must respect the territorial integrity of other states.

External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh added in a statement that New Delhi also welcomed Baghdad's decision to recognise the "existence" of the Kuwaiti state.

"In India's view all countries in the (Gulf) region must respect the territorial integrity of other states and avoid any use or threat of force," Mr. Singh said in the

statement.

A Syrian government newspaper said the Gulf standoff will end without a shot being fired because Washington wants to keep President Saddam Hussein in power as a counterbalance against Iran.

"Saddam is convinced that the United States has decided, out of its own interest, to keep him in power," the daily Al Thawra said in an editorial.

This is part of the U.S. policy of double containment of Iraq and Iran to avoid a destabilising power vacuum, it said.

"All this fuss will end quietly and without any strategic action being taken against Saddam, who, when the time is right, will be given an adequate role in the region," the newspaper said.

Clinton: Peace will not be turned back

(Continued from page 1)

prisoner exchange in a meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

"During the meeting the possibility arose from the other side, not on our part, that perhaps it would be possible to enable the hostage to be freed in exchange for Sheikh Ahmad Yassin," Mr. Ginnosar told Israel Radio.

"The instruction I had was that we were prepared to hear a concrete proposal on this matter, concrete on condition that it would be the responsibility of the Palestinian authority and it would indeed be a serious proposal," Mr. Ginnosar said.

Mr. Rabin told reporters on Friday night he ordered the commando raid after other alternatives were ruled out.

Sharaa urges U.S. to pressure Israel

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa urged the United States on Saturday to exert more influence on Israel so that obstacles impeding progress in the Middle East peace process could be removed.

He made his remarks here after talks with President Elias Hrawi, Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and Foreign Minister Faris Bouze.

During the two-hour meeting, Mr. Sharaa relayed a message from Syrian President Hafez Al Assad to Mr. Hrawi and briefed the Lebanese officials on the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to Syria.

Mr. Sharaa said that while the talks with the Israelis had not reached a "progressive stage," the Syrians had noted a more serious U.S. desire to bridge the gaps between Syria and Israel.

The Syrian-Israeli track in the U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace process has been stalled since February.

"Because of this American seriousness, the United States should exert more influence on Israel to push the peace process forward," said Mr. Sharaa.

The meeting came two days after Mr. Christopher ended his latest Mideast peace mission, his fifth peace-promoting shuttle in the region since May.

Mr. Christopher said that Israel and Syria were inching closer to a peace agreement, but acknowledged that gaps still exist.

Mr. Sharaa blamed the stalemate on Israel. Syria wants Israel to relinquish the strategic Golan Heights which it lost in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Israel refuses to take that step without a clear idea of the kind of peace Damascus would extend in return.

Mr. Christopher did not stop in Lebanon, which he has visited only once since becoming secretary of state. Syrian officials usually brief Lebanese leaders on Mr. Christopher's mission.

Lebanon seeks Israeli withdrawal from an enclave in South Lebanon that Israel carved out in 1985 to shield its northern towns from cross-border guerrilla attacks.

Lebanon and Syria are the only two front-line states that have not made peace with Israel.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Jordan recently signed preliminary accords with the Jewish state. Egypt reached a settlement in 1979.

Asked to comment on the Nobel Peace Prize, which was awarded Friday to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and his Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Mr. Sharaa said:

"There's a general feeling in the Arab World that peace has not yet prevailed. Therefore, it cannot be considered that the prize has come at the right time and for the right goal."

PNA-Hamas showdown looms

(Continued from page 1)

peace talks and sealing off the Gaza Strip.

"The Israeli government should put an end to the policy of collective punishment against the Gaza Strip and against Palestinians as a whole," Mr. Abed Rabbo told reporters after the marathon seven-hour meeting.

"We were trying our best to end these problems peacefully. The results did not surprise us when the Israeli government resorted to military operations," he added.

An official who requested anonymity said most of the Hamas supporters would be released in the next few days

but those with connections to its Qassam military wing would be held for more questioning.

Leaders from Hamas and the PLO said relations were shattered by the kidnapping. "Hamas has burned its bridges with the authority. It will be difficult for both sides to trust each other," a PLO official said.

Four Reuters journalists were still being held by the Palestinian authority. They were detained on Wednesday.

One of the three Hamas kidnappers killed in Friday's shootout, Jadalhah, was the brother of Reuters Gaza photographer Ahmad Jadalhah.

U.S. move in Gulf to cost under \$1 billion

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — The U.S. military operation to stop Iraq from invading Kuwait again is likely to cost more than \$500 hundred million but not as much as a billion, U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry said Saturday.

"If this crisis resolves in three days ... and then if we are able to move our ground forces back in a few weeks ... then the total cost of this operation will be something more than \$500 million and less than a billion," he said.

Mr. Perry told a press conference before leaving Kuwait after a two-day visit that the crisis would be over once all Iraqi Republican Guard troops pulled back from southern Iraq near Kuwait.

He earlier confirmed that Iraq was pulling back its Republican Guard forces and said he was now optimistic of a peaceful end to the Gulf standoff.

The latest intelligence that we have is that the Iraqi Republican Guard Forces have partially withdrawn," Mr. Perry said earlier at a desert camp north of here for U.S. troops deployed to defend Kuwait.

"We are continuing our deployment ... we are not pocketing a peaceful outcome yet," he said. "But I am optimistic at this stage."

Senator John Warner of Virginia, a specialist on national security issues who was travelling with Mr. Perry, said Kuwait and the Gulf states had promised to help cover a large share of the cost.

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia paid billions of dollars towards the U.S.-led operation to drive Iraqi forces from Kuwait in the January-February 1991 Gulf war.

"Vigilant Warrior"

The massive buildup of U.S. forces in the Gulf region has been baptised "Vigilant Warrior," the Defence Department announced Saturday.

Operation Vigilant Warrior provides for sending some 36,000 U.S. troops into the Gulf region.

Mideast peace takes a battering

By Barry Parker
Agence France Presse

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

— Hardliners have given another battering to Middle East peace with a hostage drama that ended in a deadly commando raid, but Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) were hanging on to their fragile dream as best they could.

"We have shown ourselves and others that we can overcome these things," government spokesman Uri Dromi told AFP.

"There is no way we will let the peace process sink or go into a deep stalemate," he added.

The Israeli hostage drama left five dead and 10 wounded on Friday night when Israeli troops stormed a hideout of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas.

Just four days earlier two men sprayed bullets along a cafe-lined Jerusalem street, killing two people and wounding 13 before being gunned down themselves.

The Nobel Peace Prize shared Friday by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres briefly recalled the lofty ambitions of the Palestinian autonomy deal they agreed a year ago.

But with Hamas vowing to kill a Jewish soldier unless their leader and 200 prisoners were released, tensions had never been higher since Israel and the PLO took the historic step towards reconciliation.

Mr. Rabin sent in crack troops who killed three Hamas kidnappers in an operation which also left the 19-year-old hostage and an Israeli lieutenant dead.

Because of the kidnapping, Israel on Tuesday suspended negotiations with the PLO on the next stage of autonomy and demanded action from Mr. Arafat to rein in his foes.

"Arafat cannot have in the same time peace with Israel and peace with Hamas," Mr. Rabin warned after the hostage bloodbath.

Mr. Rabin's spokesman, Oded Ben Ami, said the premier was "thinking about the question (of fresh talks) and will take a decision later."

But the government spokesman took a positive line.

"We have gone a long way

until now and we have developed enough vigour so now we can sustain such losses," Mr. Dromi said.

"There's enough contact and cooperation between us from Rabin and Arafat down."

"I am sure that in coming days we will see some attempt to bring things back to normal in the peace process. In a strange way it may even invigorate the peace process."

Mr. Arafat certainly wants to press on with autonomy, to hold elections for a council of ruling not just the self-rule areas of Gaza and Jericho but all the West Bank.

And to ensure Palestinian public support he needs to get the more than 5,000 prisoners out of Israeli jails, a move which could also calm headline clamour.

One senior Israeli minister told AFP: "I presume that the renewal of the talks will be discussed in the coming days."

"There have been contacts all week and there will other contacts in the next few days to resume the Cairo talks."

"We have to let the burning passions cool but I can't

Danish minister arrives today

AMMAN (J.T.) — Denmark's Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Henrik Wohlf arrives in Amman Sunday evening on a four-day official visit to Jordan during which he will meet Jordanian officials and businessmen to discuss bilateral relations.

Possibilities of cooperation among Danish experts, consultants and industrial companies and their Jordanian and Palestinian counterparts will be discussed during the visit.

The Danish official, who will take part in the opening of a conference on investment and business opportunities at the Amman Chamber of Industry on Monday, is scheduled to address a press conference Tuesday to sum up the outcome of his visit and talks with Jordanian officials.

Tawfiq Kassar, Denmark's consul general in Jordan said the minister was scheduled to have formal meetings with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan and Information Minister Jawad Anani.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan may receive Mr. Wohlf, Mr. Kassar said.

Mr. Kassar told the Jordan Times that Mr. Wohlf, who leaves for home Wednesday, is seeking to develop cooperation with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) through Jordan.

The conference, beginning on Monday, will be the second of its kind to be sponsored by the Amman Chamber of Industry. The first was held here in April of 1987.

A 13-member Jordanian business delegation returned a visit to Denmark in October 1987 when they followed up on talks on trade and economic cooperation.

COLUMN 800000

Princess Grace's later years 'haunted by marital strains'

WASHINGTON (AFP) —

Twelve years after her death, Monaco's Princess Grace is being painted in an unauthorised biography as a bitter woman who late in life sought young men's company to flee from a passionless marriage.

Grace Kelly, the patrician Hollywood actress who became Monaco's fairytale princess, is stripped of the myths traditionally associated with her life in Robert Lacey's Grace, published this month by G.P. Putnam's Sons.

The respectfully written book, which largely steers clear of scandal, sheds some light on what Lacey believes was the sadness of an extremely lonely woman, coping with an indifferent husband and rebellious daughters.

Lacey quotes several previously unpublished exchanges said to have been made by the princess to Gwen Robyns, author of the 1976 biography Princess Grace. "You know, I have come to feel very sad in this marriage. He's not really interested in me. He doesn't care about me," Princess Grace is said to have told Robyns about her husband, Prince Rainier. The list of the princess' youthful romances grows longer with every biography. She has been linked to Clark Gable, Ray Milland, Jean-Pierre Aumont, William Olden and Oleg Cassini among others. But in her later life, Lacey writes, Princess Grace enjoyed the company of a series of younger men whom he believes came to fill a void in her life, left by what became an unfulfilling marriage. The author describes an encounter between Grace Kelly and the woman who became Britain's Princess Diana. Princess Diana already was complaining of intrusive photographers, and Monaco's princess was "anything but comforting. 'Don't worry dear, I'll get worse,' she was quoted as telling Princess Diana. Princess Grace, whom Alfred Hitchcock compared to a volcano blanketed in snow, was a woman of principles, deeply concerned by her social status, Lacey's biography says.

Russia denies spying on U.K. royal family

MOSCOW (R) — A top Russian official flatly denied reports that Soviet secret agents had spied on the British royal family in the 1970s.

ITAR-TASS news agency said Yuri Kobaladze, press chief of the Foreign Intelligence Service, said the stories were being spread by people hostile to Moscow who wanted to stir up trouble before Queen Elizabeth's historic visit to Russia next week.

"It's shameful and inexplicable that the Russian press is spreading this idiotic material which British newspapers are publishing," TASS quoted Mr. Kobaladze as telling the independent Russian television channel NTV.

"Not even Soviet intelligence agents like (Englishman) Kim Philby ever set themselves the task of spying on the royal family," he said.

Queen Elizabeth flies to Moscow Monday for the first visit to Russia by a British monarch, burying decades of royal hostility towards the land that executed her Romanov cousins.

Lyon mayor has close shave in the street

LYON, France (AFP) — Lyon mayor Michel Noir had a close shave Thursday evening in a Lyon street when he was hit by "a little shaving cream" squirted on him by two passers-by, police said.

They said two persons, "whose reasons were unknown," were questioned about the incident, and one of them was jailed but then released as the mayor did not want to press charges. Royalist movement Action Française said the attackers belonged to the organisation, saying in a communiqué delivered to AFP in Paris that Action Française "supports the young royalist students of the Lyon III school who daubed the mayor of Lyon in protest against politicians' corruption." It said Mr. Noir had been creamed as "an act of derision for a despicable regime."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Saudis turn back Sudanese livestock

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Saudi Arabian port authorities last month turned back more than half of Sudanese sheep exports, charging that the livestock was diseased, a news report said Saturday. The Al Sudan Al Hadith daily quoted a senior Sudanese veterinarian as saying Saudi authorities at Jeddah port allowed 26,000 sheep to be unloaded but ordered 29,000 others to be rejected. The veterinarian, Al Sir Abdul Hai, said the Saudis alleged the rejected sheep were suffering from inflammation of the lymph glands. He said this was not classed as an infectious disease preventing livestock from being exported, adding that livestock intended for export was kept in quarantine for two to three weeks. Hai charged that the Saudi authorities had rejected the shipment due to excess numbers of sheep on local markets, which Saudi importers feared might cause a decrease in prices. The Sudanese official called for alternative international markets for Sudanese livestock exports, and for increased operations to stamp out sheep smuggling across the Red Sea.

Man gets 80 lashes for accusing woman

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A man in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was lashed 80 times with a whip for accusing a woman of having an illegitimate son, the Al Khaleej newspaper reported on Saturday. The man, identified only by his initials H.M., was flogged in public in the eastern emirate of Fujairah on Friday under a sentence by an Islamic court. He admitted in court that he had told the woman during a squabble that her son was illegitimate, the paper said. "The court sentenced him to flogging in public in accordance with Islamic Sharia (law) after he insulted the woman's honour and failed to prove his

allegations," it said.

Police conscript killed in south Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Suspected militants on Saturday opened fire on a police car killing a conscript in southern Egypt, police sources said. The incident happened when three militants ambushed the car in Mallawi, in the province of Minya, about 241 kilometres south of Cairo, killing Shehata Abdul Salam. Police shot back, but the militants escaped into the surrounding sugar-cane fields, police said. Salam was serving his military service in the police. Mallawi has become the new militant hot-bed, after police routed out their hideouts in the stronghold of Assiut, about 380 kilometres south of Cairo. On Friday suspected militants killed a civilian and seriously wounded two police officers in a village near Mallawi, police said.

Arab sentenced for killing daughter

STOCKHOLM (AP) — A district court on Friday gave an Arab Israeli who killed his daughter a relatively light sentence saying his act was influenced by his Arab upbringing. Prosecutors had demanded life imprisonment for Farag Dabas, 40, who stabbed his 18-year-old daughter to death after digging her grave. But the court rejected charges of premeditated murder and sentenced the refugee to nine years in prison for manslaughter. After serving his sentence, he will be expelled, the court said in a statement. The girl's stepmother, who witnessed the killing, was given a fine related to her income. No amount was given. The court in Lindsberg, 200 kilometres west of Stockholm, said Mr. Dabas had been "shamed" by his daughter's love affairs.